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James Kendall  
Wesleyans & the Church  
1836

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MISCELLANEOUS AND FREE STRICTURES

ON THE

PRACTICAL POSITION

OF THE

WESLEYAN CONNEXION

TOWARDS THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND,

WITH

OTHER CORRELATIVE OBSERVATIONS,

DESIGNED TO PROMOTE A

BETTER UNDERSTANDING AND PERMANENT FRIENDSHIP

BETWEEN THOSE

IMPORTANT RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES.

BY JAMES KENDALL.

LONDON :

PUBLISHED BY SIMPKIN AND MARSHALL.

PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.

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1836.

BW 332

K 4 M5

CHELMSFORD :

PRINTED BY CHALK, MEGGY, AND CHALK.

Wes. 1356

## INTRODUCTION.

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WERE it not an argument of puerile sensitiveness for a man to inform the public at full length of his sufferings for the sake of principle and consistency, I should be much inclined to make a somewhat extraordinary and biographical kind of introduction. To avoid, then, the charge of such sensitiveness, I deem it prudent to restrain such an inclination. Circumstanced as I am, however, the reader must excuse me if, while I study to be brief, I say as much about myself as may be needful to furnish the public with the reasons for printing this little production.

When stationed by the Wesleyan Conference two years since in Cumberland, I had the unhappiness to perceive that a considerable number of Methodists were (whether from principle or caprice I know not) remarkably hostile to the Church of England. I did what I could in private conversation to check this hostility, knowing it to be detrimental both to their piety and consistency as the professed followers and professedly zealous adherents of the Rev. J. Wesley.

My interference, however, with their views of the Church Establishment was worse than useless. The common declamations against tithes and rates, and popery, and clerical delinquencies (which, whether just or unjust, touch not the great *principle* of our ecclesiastical establishment, nor affect those arguments in its favour which are grounded on the immense services it has, with all its faults, done to our beloved country) were all I could obtain in reply to what I conceive to have been my correct reasoning on the subject.

Just at this time, also, very fierce contentions were going on relative to the case of Dr. Samuel Warren; and being, as a *Wesleyan*, seriously distressed in mind, subjected also as in former years to the toil of walking very long journies in all weathers to my different preaching appointments, not a little harrassed with pecuniary difficulties, the result of premature removals, and having to my then thinking no prospect of even ordinary comfort in my own connexion, I addressed a Letter to the revered Bishop of Chester, stating in general terms my opinion that the spiritual interests of the Church of England might be secured more effectually by an arrangement that would allow of Episcopal Ordination to Wesleyan Ministers, (if sufficiently educated) *not* for the purpose of taking them from their own connexion, but to render them eligible to occupy on occasion the pulpits of the Esta-

blishment *per courtesy*. In this Letter I also ventured to ask his Lordship *not* to ordain me, (though at that time I certainly wished it) but what were the requisite *qualifications* for episcopal ordination. I had a most dignified and affectionate reply.

Soon after this I had a brief correspondence with another excellent Bishop on the subject of a union between the Wesleyan Methodists and the Church of England. The knowledge of this correspondence amongst some of my friends, subjected me to no ordinary inconvenience. A few months after this I was appointed to a circuit in Lancashire where several pious Clergymen showed me particular respect. But this circumstance, connected with a renewal of my correspondence with the Prelacy (including the Archbishops of York and Canterbury), gave such amazing offence to some members of our society in that county that I was censured and threatened as a malcontent, looked upon with suspicion, regarded by some as a sly enemy to Methodism, by others as a dangerous man. Numerous absurd and false reports were widely circulated about my trying to get ordination, and I was in fact subject to a species of annoyance little short of "persecution for righteousness sake." But it was not a little cheering to my mind, (teazed as I had been with grave and oracular dictation, about the necessity of my ceasing to have any

thing to do with either Bishops or Clergy,) to have the direct applause of our Annual Liverpool District Meeting for my church-attached principles, after having invited discussion on the subject, and repeatedly requested an official examination of my conduct.

At the recent Conference held in Birmingham, being interrogated by one or two of the preachers about my sayings and doings relative to the Church, I repeatedly requested (if considered by any of them as deficient in allegiance to the connexion) to be officially examined. But I well knew that the great principles of Wesleyanism and my own were in such exact accordance, that any solitary brother professing *dissent*, and willing to debate with me before the Conference the propriety or consistency either of my principles or practices, would, if allowed to attack me, have encountered an antagonist who, however feeble on other subjects of discussion, would have easily demonstrated the *necessity* of attachment to the Church as a preservative of pure Methodism. But I am not alone in this opinion.; a very large majority of Wesleyan Ministers and people are on my side. I am sure this is the case, or public documents and periodicals give insertion to deliberate falsehoods. Reiterated statements of the respect and affection of the Methodist Connexion for the Church of England are continually making their appearance in pamphlets and newspapers,



in one shape or other, and as it would be dishonourable and unjust without evidence of the thing, to doubt the sincerity of these statements, no other inference can be drawn from them than this. The Methodist Connexion *as* a Connexion loves the Church of England and wishes its continued prosperity. In this case, then, I see not with what propriety a man who aims to consolidate and perpetuate a mutual good understanding and affection between the two bodies should be considered as employing himself in a profitless speculation, and avoided with a sensitiveness like that occasioned by contact with an agitator. O that I could succeed in convincing all men that I love the Methodist Connexion, and that my love to the Church of England is in the very highest degree consistent with that love, and also consistent with the efficient discharge of every duty which as a preacher I owe to that connexion. In my childhood and youth I was a steady member of the Church of England. When I joined the Methodists I refused to consider myself a dissenter. I read with attention and delight the works of Wesley and the early Magazines of our connexion. I read also the Minutes of various Conferences, and all the information I obtained served to increase and render absolutely impregnable my conviction that it is for the real benefit of the Methodists and the members of the Church of England to "love as brethren;" and my conviction *now* is, that

Methodism and the Church *must*, in order to the more extensive spread of true Religion, make increased efforts to understand and approve of each other. High Churchmanship must ponder its steps when tempted to dishonour itself by sneering at Methodism, and Methodism must "rejoice with trembling" while contemplating its present independent prosperity. The Church of England must abstain from drawing inferences unfavourable to the literature, eloquence, and respectability of Methodism, from what it sees of its workings in pigmy towns and villages, where its aspect, from local prejudices, from ignorance, and lack of pecuniary aid, cannot possibly be prepossessing. And the Methodists, however unhandsomely dealt with, must preserve the heavenly dignity of their Divine Master, who returned not "evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing;" for we are commanded to "bless" even those that "curse" us, and "to do good even to them that despitefully use us, and persecute us."

Our duty is to "honour all men" and to love all Christian communities, but *consistency* requires that, as the professed followers of *Wesley*, we prefer next to our own body that of the Church of England, and I must add, consistency equally requires that the Church of England prefer to other separate bodies that of the Wesleyan Methodists.

## STRICTURES, & C.

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### ORIGINAL METHODISM.

WHATEVER defects or excellences may attach themselves to the principles and usages of our British Christian Dissenters, it is certain that Mr. John Wesley never contemplated either the adoption of those *great* differences of opinion from the Established Church of England, comprehended in regular and formal *dissent*, or that more modified species of non-conformity implied in simple *secession*. This statement cannot be doubted by those who are at all conversant with Mr. Wesley's numerous writings. To such however as are either sceptical on those points of Methodist History which relate to the Church, or would be glad to have it understood that Wesley died a Dissenter, I shall respectfully address a *hinting* kind of evidence that the man so significantly designated "the venerable Founder of Methodism," was not only himself altogether in principle and partly in practice a member of the Church of England, but up to the very time of his decease wished his Societies to continue, as far as circumstances would admit, in connexion with the Establishment. The propriety or impropriety of Mr. Wesley's conduct in this instance I have nothing to do with. Good men are at liberty to indulge themselves as much as they please in profound speculation and discussion on the comparative merits of Churchism and Dissent, and, according to

their respective notions, censure or applaud Mr. Wesley as they think fit. I have no *quarrel* with them on this point, although I have long since formed, and I think on solid grounds, *my* humble opinion. I have only to do with *facts*, and (avoiding as much as possible the agitating work of debate) deduce from them fair and legitimate inferences.

The writings of the Rev. John Wesley, then, contain a considerable number of statements, including arguments, tracts, and sermons, most decidedly in favour of the Church of England, and recommendatory of a continued adherence on the part of the Methodists to that Church on the grounds both of principle and consistency. Every man who will carefully read the whole works of Wesley will *see* these statements, and, if open to conviction, find it impossible to avoid the conclusion, that original *Wesleyan* Methodism was nothing either more or less than CHURCH OF ENGLAND "Christianity in earnest."

But that I may not be charged with an attempt to support an opinion by loose and indefinite statements, I shall go a little into the direct evidence of the Church-attached principles and habits of Original Methodism.

The first fact, then, which I desire to be considered is this: that from the year 1744 to the year 1789, Mr. Wesley and his coadjutors in the Ministry, in their annual conferences, ascertained, by calm investigation, the true characteristics of their Ministry as *then* exercised, and determined to continue in connexion with the Church of England. Amongst other questions very seriously discussed at the period referred to, the following was not the least important:

"What may we reasonably believe to be God's

design in raising up the Preachers called Methodists?"

The "Answer" is—

"Not to form any *New Sect*, but to reform the nation, particularly the Church, and to spread scriptural holiness over the land."

But why did Mr. Wesley and his Conferences object to the formation of a New Sect?

The answer is obvious. These zealous Christian men *loved the Church*, and while regretting the delinquencies of a large majority of its Clergy and people, sought its reformation, not by dissent, but by a thoroughly practical adherence to its fundamental Articles and Liturgy. Being well persuaded that, could the *Church of England* be fairly aroused to a practical illustration of the "Book of Common Prayer," and to spread herself out by a multiplication of holy Preachers through the length and breadth of the land, Sectarianism would, to use the mildest form of expression, be superfluous. And here I must say that it ought to be recorded to the everlasting honour of Mr. Wesley and his Brethren, that they objected to the erection of a new and distinct community, although persecuted by many of the Clergy and Laity of their day with a malignity and virulence little less than diabolical. Churchman as I am, I regard with the most ineffable disdain and righteous indignation the conduct of those apes, whether in the University or out of it, who sought to degrade the venerated Wesley and crush the interests of that real Church of England Christianity, *nick-named* Methodism—by satire and ridicule, insolence and contempt—the choice weapons of the then finical, profane, and cowardly literati. *That* race of religion-hating persecutors has, I trust, long since become extinct.

But in spite of ill usage, Mr. Wesley and his cordially-attached Brethren, at the period in question, were in good faith members—*Reforming* members, if you please so to call them—of the Church of England.

Another question, proposed in one of these early Conferences, will furnish us with further ground for remark. A question which, taken in connexion with its answer, comprehends a sort of *legislative doctrine*, the soundness of which has never been either seriously questioned or formally repudiated by the Methodist Conference during the whole ninety-three years of its important existence.

“*Question 24.* In what view may we and our helpers be considered?”

“*Answer.* Perhaps as extraordinary messengers (i. e. out of the ordinary way) designed—First, To provoke the regular Ministers to jealousy—Secondly, To supply their lack of service toward those who are perishing for want of knowledge. But how hard is it to abide here! Who does not wish to be a little higher? Suppose to be ordained?”

Two things are here distinctly observable. The first is, that Methodist Preachers, in Wesley's days, were considered by themselves in the light of *auxiliaries to the national Clergy*. Any Preacher, therefore, at that time regarding himself in such an independent view, and with such sentiments of personal consequence, as to have no intention whatever of assisting the religious interests of the Church of England, must have been, though in connexion with Wesley, a virtual *seceder* from Wesley's original and recorded design; and must have been, in a degree at least, both inconsistent and dishonourable.

The second thing I wish to notice here is, an intimation given, that *Mr. Wesley's Cotemporary Preachers were favourable to Episcopal Ordination*; and that even a *desire for it* was not considered as incompatible with the true spirit and design of this, their Primitive Methodism.

The question, "Who does not wish to be a little higher?" "Suppose to be ordained?" may seem to some, ironical, sarcastic, or be considered as a piece of pleasantry. But when we bear in mind, that notwithstanding the wittiness of Wesley, he was not the man to indulge in time-wasting jokes, amid the grave deliberations of the Conference; we may fairly infer that although he might have asked the question, with a smile upon his *countenance*, he put it to the Preachers, with a seriousness of *mind*, ready to approve of an answer in the affirmative, if coming from *qualified* men. In his private conversations with his "helpers," Mr. Wesley could not fail to ascertain the views and wishes of those amongst them who were not merely decided but cordially attached Churchmen: nor could he consistently disapprove of any desire for ordination they might have, if they possessed the requisite amount of literary qualification. Mr. Wesley himself was episcopally ordained, as was also the incomparable *Fletcher*, who continued a Minister of the Church of England, and an eminent Methodist to the end of his life. Other Clergymen also were identified with Mr. Wesley's helpers, all of whom, while lamenting the comparative inefficiency of the Established Church, nobly resolved to seek its reformation and revive its piety not by *dissent*, but by as much of coalition as their peculiar circumstances rendered practicable. The *reason* of any Methodist Preacher in Wesley's

days wishing for ordination, must have been (we may fairly suppose) either the mere honour of the thing, as a kind of genteel elevation in the scale of society, or the more honourable and christian one of wishing to preach the same doctrines and establish the same discipline *in* the Church as persecution compelled them to preach and practise *out* of it.

Qualified Methodist Preachers in those days being *in* the Church, and having their characteristic zeal, disencumbered of all objectionable eccentricities, and under a generous patronage from the Prelacy, might, (I should imagine) have effected their hallowed and glorious object with much greater facility *within*, than without the pale of the establishment. Nay, should we follow out this thought to its fair and natural conclusion, we must arrive at the conviction, that had Mr. Wesley and his cotemporary helpers been permitted to exercise their Ministry *in* the Church, whether as regularly ordained Preachers, or as men occasionally admitted to the pulpits of the Establishment per courtesy; and had they met with no interruption, annoyance, and persecution, we should have had *no Methodism*, but the Church of England *itself* would have become by this time (with the exception perhaps of some very slight circumstantial differences) what Methodism is now, and with this substantial advantage, its piety, its zeal, its laborious efforts in employing suitable men to *itinerate*; as well as to conduct the more intellectual work of stationary pastorship (for *both* systems are demonstratively better than either exclusively) would have been sanctioned by the state, encouraged by the state, and the Church of England instead of being with respect to her agencies, an injurious conglomeration of the holy and



profane, the orthodox and the heterodox, the proud and the humble, would have been in a fair way, at least, of becoming, in her *operations* as well as Liturgy, the most Scriptural, the most exemplary, the most useful, and glorious Church on earth daily approaching to that hallowed character comprehended in the inspired description "without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing."

I now leave this point respecting ordination, and approach an extract thoroughly demonstrative of the Church-attached principles of primitive Methodism, and the force of which no sophistry can evade, no scheming expositions or Church despising logic by any possibility either counteract or subvert. To superintendents Mr. Wesley says—

"Exhort all who were brought up in the Church to *continue* therein. Set the example *yourself*; and immediately change every plan that would hinder their being at Church at least two Sundays in four. Carefully avoid whatever has a tendency to separate men from the Church. Let all the servants in our preaching-houses go to Church once on Sunday at least. Is there not a cause? Are we not by little and little sliding into a separation from the Church? O use every means to prevent this."

And what are the means Mr. Wesley recommends to prevent a separation from the Church. You shall have them.

*First.* (Says he) Exhort *all* our people to keep close to Church and Sacrament.

*Second.* Warn them all against niceness in hearing: a prevailing evil.

*Third.* Warn them all against despising the prayers of the Church.

*Fourth.* Against calling our Society the Church.

*Fifth.* Against calling our Preachers Ministers, our houses Meeting-houses; call them plain preaching-houses or chapels.

*Sixth.* Do not licence them as Dissenters till you are constrained, and then, not as a *Dissenter*, but a *Methodist*.

*Question 45.* But are we not Dissenters?

*Answer.* No: although we call sinners to repentance, and although we frequently use extemporary prayer, and unite together in a religious Society; yet we are not Dissenters in the only sense which our law acknowledges; namely, those who renounce the service of the Church. We *do not*, we *dare not*, separate from it. We are not seceders, nor do we bear any resemblance to them. We set out upon quite opposite principles. The seceders laid the foundation of their work in judging and condemning others. We laid the foundation of our work in judging and condemning ourselves.

They begin everywhere with shewing their hearers how fallen the Church and Ministers are.

We begin everywhere with shewing our hearers how fallen they are in themselves.

But some will say "our own service is public worship:" yes, but not such as *supersedes* the Church Service. If it were designed to be *instead* of the Church Service, it would be essentially defective, for it seldom has the four grand parts of public prayer, deprecation, petition, intercession, and thanksgiving. If we put ours in the room of the Church Service, we hurt them that stay with us, and ruin them that leave us, for then they will go nowhere, but lounge the Sabbath away without any public worship at all.

*Question 46.* Nay, but is it not our duty to separate from the Church, considering the wickedness both of the Clergy and people ?

*Answer.* We conceive not. 1st. Because both the priests and people were full as wicked in the Jewish Church, and yet it was not the duty of the Holy Israelites to separate from them.—2nd. Neither did our Lord command his disciples to separate from them. He rather commanded the contrary, &c.

I am not able to show whether all the superintendents in Mr. Wesley's time used these prescribed means to prevent this dreaded separation from the Church. I cannot tell whether they *exhorted* their people to keep close to Church and Sacrament, neither am I certain that they warned them against "niceness in hearing, and the pitiful conceit of despising the prayers of the Church." But I find no difficulty in affirming that if they *were* faithful in adhering to Mr. Wesley's injunction relative to the Church, *then* were they Church of England men. And if they were *not* faithful, but either secretly or openly encouraged secession, they were very inconsistent and not very honourable : for as men of honourable and consistent principle they should have resigned their superintendency, and separated themselves from *Wesley* as well as from the Church. But I should *imagine* they were in those days all faithful and honourably consistent. Consequently it must be fair to conclude, that the distinguishing characteristic of *original* Wesleyan Methodism was a zealous and persevering effort to spread "scriptural holiness" over the land as much as possible, through the medium of the Church of England. A difficult undertaking, most undoubtedly, but not impracticable, had the Church of England

encouraged, caressed, and assisted, as she ought to have done, her own legitimate, faithful, and obedient son, the Rev. John Wesley. Nevertheless, while Wesley lived, his attachment to the Church "was strong and decided;" and though absolutely forced, from circumstances, to practise even "serious deviations from the established order of the Church," his regard for it continued to the end of his life unabated. "He frequented (says the Rev. T. Jackson) her public services at every opportunity, and exhorted all his societies to follow his example. Thousands of people in almost all parts of the kingdom, who had previously lived in the total neglect of religion, became regular attendants upon the services of the Church and devout communicants."

Original Methodism, then, was, from principle and deliberate choice, cordially attached to the Church of England. A very small minority of its members, however, appear, from subsequent events, to have wished for and contemplated a thorough separation from the Church, but these persons were strenuously discouraged by Mr. Wesley and the majority. Additional facts and reasonings, both numerous and powerful, I might easily adduce, as lucid illustrations of the decided Church of Englandism of Original Methodism; but every unprejudiced mind will be sufficiently satisfied with those I have already produced,—and as for those who *dislike* the Church, whether conscientiously or otherwise, so well do *I know* them, and so deeply have I suffered from some of them, that to multiply arguments favourable to this topic would be to multiply offences, and provoke, without necessity, in certain quarters, a talking, *unargumentative*, and quarrelling opposition. There is a marvellous stub-

bornness in human nature, which, when not counteracted by the grace of God, makes many a man tenacious of his opinions, however *false*, and determines him to increase his dislike and opposition to his neighbour, just in proportion to his neighbour's correctness of reasoning and weightiness of argument in the detection of error and establishing of the truth.

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## METHODISM AT PRESENT.

### SECTION I.—PREAMBLE.

THE first important departure from Church Methodism occurred about the year 1794. *About* this period, preaching in church hours and the administration of Baptism and the Lord's Supper agitated the Societies. The dissenting Methodists were resolved if possible to have these ordinances administered by Methodist preachers in their own chapels. These innovations were consented to with no ordinary reluctance on the part of the Conference. Extremely and nobly desirous as it was to prevent dissent on the one hand and to preserve the peace of the Societies on the other, its Ministers were placed in circumstances most emphatically afflictive. At length, however, the dissenters won the day, and real Wesleyanism became adulterated. Some respectable and

venerable Methodists now living inform me with what strong dissatisfaction and grief, themselves and many others viewed the above mentioned innovations. It is pretty certain, however, that many considered these additions to primitive usage, inconsistent as they were with Mr. Wesley's design, as a very glorious *epoch* in Methodist history. The conscientious Dissenter would have reasonable cause for exultation. The fidgetty Christian would rejoice in having something *new* by this act of shaking off the church and doing without its clergy, and it is not unlikely that even amongst the preachers, a few would feel a pleasure in the idea of the connexion thus magnanimously setting up for itself, and saying to the Church of England—"I venerate and love you, but God has prospered me in members, in public estimation, in eloquent and even learned preachers, and I can now comfortably dispense with your temples and services, as I have enow of these in my possession and more at my command. Subsequently then to the period of 1794, or thereabouts, Methodism has been a distinct and an independent community.

But according to the "*Minutes from 1744 to 1789*" Methodism ought never to have been separated from the Church of England. I say according to these "*minutes*." Whether they were right or wrong politic or impolitic is another question. I may venture, however, to *suppose*, that had pure Methodism, after the decease of Wesley exercised a little *more* patience, and resolved to remain in the Established Church in spite of any Lordly Rector's frown or other species of annoyance, had its members persevered in Church attendance according to Mr. Wesley's prescription, the Church of England *might* ere this have been

purged, leavened, and so effectually reformed as to its connexion with the state and general management that we should have been in these days much less disturbed by the fierce controversies of Church Government which have so maddened the hearts of Christians against one another. And we should have had, may I not *suppose*, a much greater amount of practical argumentation in defence both of Methodism and the Church, than either of them now possesses. That Methodism by Church attendance can subserve the interests of religion is evident, from a number and variety of facts. I give one. Mr. Wesley, in his Journal of 1762, says in one place, "I had observed to the Society last week that I had not seen one congregation, ever in Ireland, behave so ill at Church as those at Athlone, laughing, talking, and staring about during the whole service. I added, this is *your* fault; for if you had attended the Church as you ought to have done, *your* presence and example would not have failed to influence the whole congregation! And so it appeared. I saw not one to day, either laughing, talking, or staring about, but a remarkable seriousness was spread from the one end of the Church to the other."

So much then for the substantially good effects of Methodists going to Church in 1762, a period when they were a people few, despised and persecuted. Let good sense then decide what proportion of beneficial influence both to themselves and the Church people their Church attendance *now* would have, when so exceedingly numerous, and as a body so decidedly respectable! But I now anticipate my difficulties and shall begin the discussion of them in the following section.

## SECTION II.—DIFFICULTIES.

It has long appeared to myself exceedingly important to the interests of religion in general, and to the welfare of the Church and the Methodists in particular, that some positive determinations should be come to, and be explicitly and officially recorded in public documents respecting the real and exact positions that these two great and immensely important Bodies intend permanently to maintain towards each other. I think it also a matter of great national consequence that the Methodist Connexion should either be recognized, and publicly and officially acknowledged by the Prelacy and the Conference as a section of the Church of England, or permit itself to be called a body of Dissent. The exact position of the large and highly respectable body of Dissenters is obvious, and well defined, and as far at least as *decision* is concerned, highly honourable to themselves and favourable to their peculiar interests. They *profess* to differ in *opinion* from the Church of England on certain points of doctrine and Church government, and they therefore differ in *practice*.

Methodism, with all her commanding and acknowledged excellencies, wants *uniformity*. A noble structure. But of what order? She has within her pale Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and English Dissenters. These are all united in their opinions respecting the essential peculiarities of Methodism,—namely, its general doctrines, its class meetings, love feasts, watch night conferences, &c. But each man reserves to himself the independent right of occasional going to Church or to the Dissenters' chapel. *Consistency*, how-



ever, would at once determine that *should* it at any period become necessary for Methodism to alter its isolated position and amalgamate with some other body, the Episcopalians or Church of England men would have the most undoubted right to *demand* an alliance with the Establishment: and in case of any great commotion in these great bodies, which we do not want except it be for their benefit, the *Church-attached* Methodists might in all fairness and justness ask their own brethren in the connexion—Who was it that *first* disturbed our peaceable and loving Society?—*Answer. Methodist Dissenters.*

Who, in 1794, sought and obtained a rivalry with the Establishment by the preaching in church hours and the introduction of the Sacraments into our Chapels?—*Methodist Dissenters.*

Who produced, and who now constitute the new Connexion?—*Dissenters.*

What are the sects of the Bryanites and Christians called Ranters?—*Dissenters.* If not I sincerely beg their pardon, and shall be happy to find myself mistaken.

Who made the vulgar row about the organ at Leeds?—*Dissenters.*

Who have recently sought to revolutionize the whole Connexion?—*Dissenters.*

Now let the reader observe I am only stating facts, and offering no comment on them; and I say, the Church-attached Methodist has an indisputable *right* to ask—Are the practical Dissenters of our Connexion in the mightiness of their wisdom, first to dictate to the Conference, and by their characteristic complaining of grievances and overwhelming importunities to force *it* into practical secession, and

then to compel the *real* Wesleyans either to suffer the inconvenience of perpetual absence from the Church, and in most places the consequent loss of their beloved Liturgy, or with afflicted hearts to retire from the Connexion?

Are our Methodist Dissenting Brethren to be indulged the liberty of *virtually* and *positively*, though not formally—*superintending the Conference itself* by insisting upon an absolute renunciation of all connexion with the Church of England? If you say they *have* that right, and we have done well in yielding to them, *then* I affirm in the most positive and unequivocal manner, that Methodism at present is *not Wesleyan* Methodism, but a body either of schismatics or real Dissenters.

If you say that our present separate existence from the Church of England is a matter of unavoidable necessity—that it is the same thing as Mr. Wesley's *own* deviations from the Church, only on a more extended scale. That it is the result of increased attachment to the distinguishing peculiarities of our system, and of increased preference for our Ministry before that of the Established Church, then I say that as a Connexion no candid Christian can denounce our present position towards the Establishment, because, if through the medium of our *peculiar* religious ordinances, (some of which the Church of England not only does not afford, but through ignorance complains of,) we can instrumentally “bring many” thousands “to righteousness,” it would be criminal in us, for the sake of rigid adherence to the primitive Churchmanship of our Methodist forefathers, to lose so glorious an opportunity of saving souls.

If, however, the Methodist Connexion is pre-

pared officially to affirm that our thorough separation from the Establishment is *not* a matter of necessity but of principle and deliberate choice, the result of conscientious dislike to the Church of England, *then* our degeneracy from Wesleyan Principles is manifest, and some of the recent *acts* of the Conference are against its *avowed principles*, and the *class books* are against us all. But to convince all men that this is not the case, and that (whatever may be the views and feelings of some of our brethren) the Conference *as* a Conference, is friendly to the Church of England, and must be considered as *regretting* that anything in the Church of England itself should compel our separate existence, I shall call the attention of the reader to two important documents.

The one, a learned pamphlet, written by the Rev. Thomas Jackson, Editor of the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, and published at the request of the Conference so recently as 1834. This pamphlet is now in its second edition. It is entitled "The Church and the Methodists." The subject of it is "The Principles and Conduct of Mr. Wesley and of the Religious Connexion founded by him in regard to the Church of England." It purports to be "the substance of a speech addressed to the Wesleyan Conference, August 12, 1834."

The other document is in our authorised class books, now in universal use amongst us.

First, then, let us look at Mr. Jackson's pamphlet. On the title page is this motto—

"They that are enemies to the Church are enemies to me. I am a friend to it, and ever was."  
"John Wesley."

From this, then, we may justly infer that those

important personages significantly called "Red hot Voluntaries," whose magnanimous doings have occasionally made such a mighty stir amongst us, are (whether right or wrong) enemies to John Wesley, or at least Mr. Wesley, were he living, would esteem them as such; but as I have no inclination to encourage the animadversions of party spirit, I forbear all further comment on this interesting motto.

Mr. Jackson's pamphlet is, to my thinking, in all points of view so decidedly excellent, and so finely illustrative of the true nature of genuine *Wesleyan* Methodism, that were it not for my objection to compilation work in the business of small book making, I should be much inclined to incorporate the principal part of it in this little essay; but as I love and endeavour to practice brevity in my humble communications, I shall make but a few short extracts and venture my opinion upon them.

Mr. Jackson's statement, already adverted to, deserves to be repeated. "Mr. Wesley" says he (page 6,) "whom they" (the Methodists) "acknowledge as their founder, was a Clergyman of the Church of England. In that Church he was bred and nurtured; and through *the whole of his life* his attachment to it was strong and decided." Whatever alteration then might have taken place in Mr. Wesley's practice towards the Church, his *principles* of attachment remained through life.

Page 11. "It is easy to perceive that as a public man, Mr. Wesley was actuated by two distinct principles. The first is [Mr. J. puts the following in large capitals to assist the intelligent and candid reader, I should imagine, to perceive the demonstration of Wesleyans loving the Church.] "That he was bound

to promote true religion to the utmost limit of his ability; and the second, That even in the attainment of this object, he ought never to deviate from the order of the Church, but in cases of necessity, and then as little as possible."

I am not certain what those cases of necessity for deviating from the order of the Church are to which Mr. Jackson refers. But I am much more familiar with *some* cases of necessity than I like to be. By the "order of the Church," we may either understand the Church attendance of Wesleyans or the using of the Church Liturgy in our Chapels; the former practice is almost universally discontinued. The latter is partially adopted as an accommodation to those friends who love their prayer books in connexion with Methodist instead of Church Preaching.

Now, in the great majority of country circuits, where in my opinion the Liturgy is most needed, it is never used. Why! Because its introduction would disturb the peace and possibly annihilate the very existence of the Societies. In these circumstances it is evident that the "necessity" for the *deviation* referred to has its origin in *practical* if not *theoretic dissent*. And in these circumstances I conceive that all our friends who successfully oppose the introduction of the Liturgy, owe a debt of gratitude to their Church-attached Brethren, for their generous *forbearance* in refusing to pain any member's mind about the Liturgy, though the loss of it is to them deeply felt and deplored.

Further on in the book I shall give *reasons* for attachment to the Liturgy.

Page 12. Mr. J. says that Mr. Wesley "spent a long and most laborious life in attempting to promote her (the Church's) spiritual interests, and in the

earnest hope that she would at length relax in her hostility towards him, and avail herself of his success ; and with his *expiring breath* he uttered his daily prayer for her *perpetuity* and *welfare*. "Bless the Church and King," said the dying Saint, just before he breathed his last, "and grant us truth and peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, for ever and ever."

Whoever, then, does not wish the perpetuity and welfare of the Established Church, may be a Methodist of some sort—may be learned, philosophical—a corrector of abuses—a legislator for legislators—a Solomon in his way—but I protest he is not a real *Wesleyan* Methodist. I do not say he is *wrong* in not being of Wesley's opinion about the Church, neither do I say he is right, for as "Roger de Coverley" observes, "much may be said on both sides." I only affirm he is not a thorough *Wesleyan* ; and I should not give myself the trouble to say even this, did I not know what an eternal prating many of the leaders of the Societies who have, at different periods, left us, make about their love to "John Wesley," and their "primitive Methodism," as they call it. *Primitive Methodism* ! Pitiful delusion ! The *primitive* Methodists were pious members of the Church of England uniting together in a religious Society.

Let it be observed, I am not charging this inconsistency upon the *whole Societies* of the persons referred to, but upon their agitating leaders.

Mr. J.'s pamphlet would furnish me with materials for an octavo volume of exposition and comment on the subject of Wesleyanism, did not important prudential reasons compel me to be exceedingly brief.

I must, however, take notice of another depart-

ment of his work headed "The Wesleyan Conference and the Established Church."

The Reader must now take his farewell of my humble self for a few pages, and read Mr. Jackson, pages 32 to 37.

## THE WESLEYAN CONFERENCE AND THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.

MR. WESLEY died on the 2d of March, 1791, at the advanced age of eighty-seven years, having continued his astonishing labours for the spiritual benefit of mankind, with scarcely any abatement, till within a few days of his dissolution. At his decease the different societies in Great Britain, which had been raised up in connexion with his ministry, amounted to upwards of seventy thousand people, the pastoral care of whom, by his appointment, devolved upon the Conference. When that body assembled in July following, the bereavement which they had sustained in the decease of their venerated Founder was deeply felt and lamented.

"It may be expected," say they, "that the Conference make some observations on the death of Mr. Wesley; but they find themselves utterly inadequate to express their ideas and feelings on this awful and affecting event. Their souls do truly mourn for their great loss; and they trust they shall give the most substantial proofs of their veneration for the memory of their most esteemed Father and Friend, by endeavouring, with great humility and diffidence, to follow and imitate him in doctrine, discipline, and life."—*Minutes of Conference, vol. 1, p. 234.*

At this time it was manifest to every attentive observer, that the connexion could not long be preserved in its integrity, unless some important alterations were introduced into its economy, especially in regard to public worship, and the administration of the Lord's Supper. The spirit which had refused to Mr. Wesley permission to preach in the Churches, had driven him into the fields and lanes, and there excited mobs to annoy him, in many places manifested the same hostility to his people, who were frequently made the objects of attack and bitter censure when they appeared at Church, whether to unite in public worship, or to receive the Lord's Supper. Nor can it be denied, that too many of the Clergy who thus treated them were openly immoral

in their lives. In the year 1788, Mr. Wesley remarked, that "the Clergy, so far from wishing the Methodists to continue in the Church, used all the means in their power, fair and unfair, to drive them out of it."\* In this state of things, to force the societies generally to attend with regularity the services of the establishment was impossible; and for some time Mr. Wesley, with all his influence and authority, had been unable to keep the whole of his chapels closed during the time of public worship in Churches. He had peremptorily refused to his preachers permission to administer the Lord's Supper to the societies; and the consequence was, that this ordinance was most awfully neglected among them, to the great injury of Christian piety, and the distress of many upright and conscientious persons. It was impossible that this state of things should be permanent; nor could Mr. Wesley, had he lived, have kept the societies in peace, upon the plan of forcing them to communicate in the Church; and hence he ordained several of the Preachers at home, by the imposition of hands, that, after his decease, the Conference might pursue such measures as they should deem necessary for the advancement of Christian piety. With two or three exceptions, the Conference consisted of men who had never received Episcopal ordination, and who did not therefore stand in the same relation to the Established Church in which Mr. Wesley had stood: and it might therefore be expected that they would avail themselves of the earliest opportunity, to introduce the sacraments into the chapels, and to open them for divine service during Church-hours; or, at least, that they would intimate to the societies and congregations that such arrangements might be speedily anticipated. From this, however, they abstained. They knew the feelings of many of the people with whom they were connected; and yet they published the following announcement in their Minutes:—"We engage to follow *strictly the plan which Mr. Wesley left us at his death.*"

The uneasiness which had been long cherished continued in some of the societies through the year; and at the Conference of 1792 the applications for the Lord's Supper were so urgent, and yet in many of the Preachers and people there was such a dread of departing from their original plan, that they agreed to decide by lot, not the right to administer, but the question of actual administration for the ensuing year. *Whether they did right in resorting to this method of decision, may admit of a doubt*; but, at all events, it shows their conscientiousness, and desire to avoid all precipitation; and the nature of the difficulties with which they were environed will awaken the sympathies of every candid and pious mind. The spiritual interests of

\* Works, vol. xiii. p. 233.



a vast body of religious people were deeply concerned. The result of this measure was declared by the following entry in the Minutes :—"The Lord's Supper shall not be administered by any person among our societies in England and Ireland, for the ensuing year, on any consideration whatever, except in London." The reason for excepting London was, that a Clergyman, Episcopally ordained, had been regularly appointed for several years, to administer the Lord's Supper to the societies there, especially in the City-road chapel ; and no interference with this established order was contemplated.

To prevent a division in the Connexion the Conference was compelled, in the following year, 1793, to consent to the administration of the Lord's Supper in the Methodist chapels ; but the rule of administration was made so strict, that the boon was scarcely attainable. *Entire unanimity* was required in every society to whom the ordinance was to be conceded ; so that one or two individuals in a society might deprive all the rest of their brethren of the privilege they desired, as connected with their salvation. The regulation was communicated to the societies in a Circular Letter, of which the following is an extract :—

"Our venerable father, who is gone to his great reward, lived and died a member and friend of the Church of England. His attachment to it was so strong and so unshaken, that nothing but irresistible necessity induced him to deviate from it in any degree. In many instances God obliged him to do this : He powerfully called him forth into the streets and open fields, and afterwards raised to his assistance hundreds of men who never passed through the usual forms of ordination. To all these evident providences of God, Mr. Wesley submitted, though at first with great reluctance. In consequence he found himself obliged to erect chapels, which were neither consecrated according to the usual method of the Church of England, nor in the least subject to the direction of the national Episcopacy. In all these things he deviated from the Establishment, merely on the ground of unavoidable necessity ; or, which is the same to a truly pious soul, from the clear, manifested providence and will of God.

"A dilemma, or difficulty, of a similar kind has been experienced by us since the death of Mr. Wesley. A few of our societies have repeatedly importuned us to grant them the liberty of receiving the Lord's Supper from their own preachers. But, desirous of adhering most strictly to the plan which Mr. Wesley laid down, we again and again denied their request. The subject, however, is now come to its crisis. We find that we have no alternative, but to comply with their requisition, or entirely to lose them ! O, brethren, we 'hate putting away !' especially those who are members of the mystical body of Christ, and our dearly beloved brethren ; and whose only error, where they do

err, is that of the judgment, and not of the heart. And can we suffer these to forsake their faithful Pastors, and possibly to run into the jaws of some ravening wolf, when the point in contest must be allowed by all to be *unessential* to salvation ?

“ But we are not insensible that our brethren on the other side may justly urge, ‘ Are not our interests as dear to you as theirs ? Why, then, will you grieve us in so tender a point ? Why will you oppose us in those particulars which we think of very great importance to the prosperity of Zion ? Why will you force upon us a term of communion to which we never consented ? or expect us to remain united to those who will be ever grieving us by pressing the necessity of compliance with *that* which we judge to be highly injurious to the cause of God.’

“ Such is the dilemma, dear brethren, to which we have been reduced. We allow the full force of the arguments which the brethren who disapprove of the administration of the Lord’s Supper urge, as above : nor can we, on any consideration, lay on them a new term of communion, or suffer a *single person* among them to be grieved by the reasonings of those who wish for an innovation in our plan. We therefore weighed this delicate subject with the greatest seriousness and deliberation, feeling the tenderest pity for those of our brethren who thought themselves aggrieved, and came finally to the following resolution :—‘ That the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper shall not be administered by the Preachers, in any part of our Connexion, except where *the whole society is unanimous for it*, and *will not be contented without it* ; and, in even those few exempt societies, it shall be administered, as far as practicable, in the evening only, and according to the form of the Church of England.’ For we could not bear that the sacrament, which was instituted by our Lord as a bond of peace and union, should become a bone of contention ; and are determined never to sanction the administration of that holy ordinance for the purpose of strife and division.

“ You may clearly see from hence, dear brethren, that it is *the people*, in the instances referred to, who have forced us into this further deviation from our union to the Church of England. Still we wish to be united to it as a body at large. The few societies which answer the description mentioned in the above resolution need but have a small influence on the whole Connexion. We cannot, however, we will not, part with any of our dear flock, who love God and man, on account of unessential points. For we love you *all*, and are the servants of you all, for Jesus’s sake. But we entreat our societies at large, (the few exempt cases excepted,) to continue, as usual, in connexion with the Church of England ; and we shall, with great cheerfulness and contentment, labour among them according to that

simple original plan of Methodism, established, and left us by our venerable friend."

At this time the public mind was in a state of great excitement, in consequence of the French Revolution ; and the Conference, therefore, adds,—

"We must observe to you, in conclusion, that we feel the most unfeigned loyalty to the King, and a sincere attachment to the Constitution. We reverence the Government ; are conscious of the many blessings we enjoy under our gracious Sovereign, and are thankful to God for them ; and do earnestly and sincerely recommend the same principles and spirit to you."

In a subsequent address to the societies, by the same Conference, it is added,—

"We have not departed from the plan which was left us by our venerable father, Mr. Wesley, in the smallest degree, except in the few exempt cases where the people have been *unanimous* for the Lord's Supper, and *would not be contented without it* : and we were brought to the awful alternative, of granting their requisition, in this instance, or of losing them entirely from our Connexion.

"A dispensation of the Gospel has been committed to us ; and we have, in obedience to the call of God, dispensed the word of truth ; and God has set his seal thereto. Myriads of immortal souls have been awakened and converted by our ministry. Many thousands of these are safely lodged in Abraham's bosom ; and many thousands still remain under our care, in the kingdom and patience of Jesus. We cannot, therefore, sport with their salvation ; we dare not throw stumbling-blocks in their way ; nor can we bear to lose them, if we possibly can help it, till we present them without spot, and blameless, before the presence of the divine glory. But we are determined, as a body, to remain in connexion with the Church of England ; and again advise you to be satisfied with the simple original plan of Methodism, which has been so wonderfully blessed of the Lord. You have known us long, and loved and esteemed us long ; and, we believe, will receive our solemn declaration as proceeding from upright hearts. And we do assure you that we have no design or desire to make our societies separate churches."

These extracts demonstrate the extreme reluctance with which the Conference was drawn into any deviation from Mr. Wesley's plan ; and the determination of that body, who in this were supported by a majority of the societies, to violate the order of the Established Church as little as possible.

In the year 1794 the Conference—still resolved, as much as possible, to resist innovation, and tread in the steps of their venerated Founder—gave the societies the following results of their deliberations on the subjects in question :—

“ Preaching in church hours shall not be permitted, except for special reasons, and where it will not cause a division.

“ As the Lord’s Supper has not been administered, except where the society has been unanimous for it, and would not have been contented without it; it is now agreed that the Lord’s Supper shall not be administered in future, where the union and concord of the society can be preserved without it.

“ The Preachers will not perform the office of baptism, except for the desirable ends of love and concord; though baptism, as well as the burial of the dead, was performed by many of the Preachers long before the death of Mr. Wesley, and with his consent.”

It was impossible that these concessions, guarded and limited as they were, could give general satisfaction to the societies, because they gave to individual members the power to oppress their brethren, and that in the affairs of private conscience. Suppose a society to have consisted of several hundred persons, all of whom, with the exception of one or two, were desirous of “ eating of that bread, and drinking of that cup,” at the hands of the Ministers by whom they had been converted from the error of their way; yet this very inconsiderable minority might offer an effectual resistance to the claim, however conscientiously it might be preferred. Nothing could give birth to such defective legislation but an almost *unconquerable desire* and determination to keep the societies in union with the Church, according to Mr. Wesley’s arrangement.

What does this mass of information teach us? Nothing less than the great, impressive, painful fact that Wesleyan Methodism never would have been separated from the Established Church, had not its Members been forced away from it by the united and sinful exertions of both Clergy and Laity.

I call this a *painful* fact considered in itself, because Mr. Wesley and his cotemporary followers wished himself and them to continue *in* the Church. In its *consequences*, however, this fact is partly to be regretted, partly to be gloried in. Regretted so far as it has entailed a lasting disgrace upon a faction of ungodly clergymen and savage boobies preposterously calling themselves *Churchmen*!

*Churchmen* indeed! Had the iniquitous dolts ever

read their Prayer Books? Regretted so far as it compelled the *real* Members of the Church of England to abandon her ordinances, and with extreme reluctance and grief of soul to establish separate and independent services.

But this fact is to be gloried in so far as it has been mightily sanctified by the Lord Jesus Christ in the conversion I should suppose of even *millions* of sinners, reckoning the converts from Wesley's days to our own.

Let us not, however, blame the present race of clergy for the faults of their predecessors. Some of them would have us all in the Church again, and there are those of us who would have no objection in case the Prelacy should at any time make to us some thoroughly honourable and manageable propositions.

Let the reader observe, I say *some* of the clergy want us, and *some* of us are not unfriendly to a union with them. But here is the mighty difficulty of difficulties! How is any thing like a practical and organized union between the Church and the Methodists to be effected? I am aware that the almost universal opinion is that such a union is neither possible nor desirable. I do not subscribe to this opinion. I think it *is* possible, and that it *is* desirable, and that the difficulty does not lie so much in the *method* of union as in the entire objection to the union itself on the part of a portion of the Church people and a portion of the Methodists. But, then, let all men be assured of this, that solid, permanent, evangelical peace cannot be secured while the positions of these great bodies are so unfixed and eccentric. The little strifes and animosities existing occasionally in many of our small towns and villages between Church clergymen and Methodists prognosti-

cate, I fear, a rupture of no enviable description, and of no small magnitude. We as a body have neither ability nor inclination to injure the Church of England, but in some parts of the kingdom I fear the Church of England may injure us. By virtue of that almost unlimited influence which the usages of genteel British society allow to clergymen, they may, when they choose to set themselves against us, drain our little chapels—bribe our children from our Sabbath schools, and get our poor trustees into grievous difficulties. But when they injure us they injure themselves. They, to a very large extent, strengthen the prejudices of our conscientiously dissenting brethren, and create prejudices, even in Church Methodists, where none before existed; and by strengthening prejudice they diminish the popular credit and influence of the Establishment. I am talking now not of fictions but realities; realities, the consideration of which assures me that something ere long must be done to bring us nearer together or keep us farther asunder. Some plan must be hit upon to make the little Methodist chapel attractive to village churchmen, and the village church attractive to the resident Methodists; so to arrange the *public services*, for instance, that both parties may go to both places. I think it is an error in Methodism to build chapels in small neighbourhoods where pious clergymen are located; and I think it an error in Churchism when they *are* built to endeavour to subvert them; I think it an error in Methodism to despise the Liturgy and occasionally admit incompetent persons to occupy its pulpits; and I think it an error in Churchism to infer from such irregularities that we are all fanatics or semi-idiots.

But where is the remedy?

Is religious *unity* (desirable on scriptural terms

everywhere) desirable in a country village? Certainly. Then there must be mutual *concession* and mutual *accommodation* to promote it. Grandmamma's adage "Where there is a will there is a way," may admonish us here; and the *way* I should conceive is easy.

Let not the services interfere, and let each place of worship have its fair proportion of *time*. Should the resident clergyman, forgetting the proper spirit of his office and his proper dignity as a Christian gentleman, assume airs and denounce the Methodists as intruders and enemies, he must look for a species of opposition not originally contemplated.

And should the village Methodist, forgetting or rejecting the principles of his Founder, rail at the Church and the clergyman, he must calculate upon a retaliation which, comprising a mixture of justice and acrimony, may threaten the extinction of his cause.

So far as villages are concerned our difficulties lie here. Some of our members love for a part of the day to go to Church, and while these members attend their classes and occasionally hear our preaching, we neither can, nor dare, nor ought to put them out of society. But then the other members who prefer attendance *exclusively* to our services, consider themselves slighted, and Methodism treated with contempt by their Church attending brethren; and if they could they would prevail upon their Ministers to dismiss such church attenders from the society.

This is a dilemma. I know of no remedy for this but an amicable adjustment of the public services and interchange of attendance; and when it is considered that in very numerous places the bulk of our Sunday evening congregations is composed of church people,

I must insist upon it that it is extremely uncourteous as well as extravagantly inconsistent in any Methodist to refuse occasional attendance at Church. Two things I would have such a one seriously to consider ; viz. that thousands of church people frequently attend and love our services, and thousands of them in a pecuniary way contribute to the support of Methodism. Nay, mark this, a *real* Churchman, a serious Prayer-book Christian feels often in his inmost soul a want of that religious fervour and scriptural excitement to practical Godliness which the Methodist chapel never fails, more or less, to supply. It is matter of gratitude and holy transport to a true Wesleyan to know that parish Ministers are now in numerous places converting their churches by their faithful energetic preaching into a sort of Methodist chapel. So that the good Churchman has less need than formerly to go abroad for excitement. But why, O why should not these things remove these odious little pigmy prejudices from both the Methodists and Churchmen of the present generation, and cause us to "love as brethren," and by mutual accommodation "Keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." We cannot indeed be formally amalgamated in one body without some very momentous alterations in the discipline of the Establishment, such as should bring the parish churches and Methodist chapels throughout the land into the equal possession of the Prelacy and the Conference, and consequently admit of at least a *selection* of Wesleyan preachers into Church pulpits, and a *selection* of clergymen into Methodist chapels.

But we can be more comfortable and prosperous in our little towns and villages if we make the requisite effort.



The contentions of village Churchmen and Methodists in some places are exceedingly mischievous, and tend to destroy religion, body, and soul; and as to the snarling scratching *way* in which these contentions are sometimes carried on, I confess they remind me (forgive the homeliness of the illustration) of an odd story I remember somewhere to have met with about two fierce cats, who after repeated frizzlings and spitting and squalling, fell upon and *ate each other up*, leaving nothing but the *tails*. But it is an objection of no small magnitude, and one which I acknowledge is entitled to very serious consideration, that if we recommend our people to go to Church they may choose eventually to prefer the Church, and leave Methodism.

To this objection I reply,

*First.* That in different parts of the kingdom we have members of our societies whose regular church attendance neither keeps them from our chapels, nor diminishes their affection for us, nor lessens their subscriptions to our cause.

*Second.* It is my settled opinion, that occasionally going to Church, when we have no services in our own chapels, and *devoutly* using the Liturgy there, has a tendency to increase and consolidate our affection to the peculiarly spiritual exercises of our Class Meetings, Watch Nights, Love Feasts, Prayer Meetings, and Preachings. I will speak for myself. It was not till I began to hear the Methodists preach that I *enjoyed* the Liturgy, though a regular thorough-paced Churchman. And when I began to enjoy the Liturgy, (to put my very heart and soul to its multifarious and scriptural expressions,) I began to enjoy the services of the Methodist chapel.

Again, I desire it to be considered, that I am not

urging Church attendance where an ungodly minister preaches, (though I might, with certain explanations, recommend even *this*, consistently with Wesleyan principles,) or where church people pour *contempt* upon us, and keep from our chapels. But I recommend this attendance for the advantage of the Liturgy, (and preaching, too, where it is sound and edifying,) and for the sake of Christian unity and Methodist consistency.

I now come, as I proposed, to the consideration of the *Class Book* document. The Fourth and Fifth Sections of the "Rules Relating to the Society" are as follows :—

#### RULES RELATING TO THE SOCIETY.

##### *IV.—Of Service in Church-Hours.*

The cases in which it has been agreed to allow service in what are commonly called church-hours, are,

1. When the Church-Minister, Rector, Vicar, or Curate, is a notoriously wicked man.

2. When he preaches Arian, Socinian, or any other equally pernicious doctrine.

3. When there are not Churches in the Town or Parish sufficient to contain the people.

4. Where there is no Church within two or three miles.

5. When a majority of the Trustees of any Chapel, on the one hand, and of the Stewards and Leaders of the Society belonging to that Chapel, on the other, allow of and request it; and as to places where there is a Society and no Chapel, wherever the majority of the Stewards and Leaders of that Society testify that it is the wish of the people, and that it will cause no division among them.

6. Wherever Divine Service is performed in England on the Lord's Day, in church-hours, the officiating Preacher shall read either the Service of the Church, our venerable Father's Abridgment of it; or, at least, the Lessons appointed by the Calendar. But we recommend either the full Service or the Abridgment.

*V.—Concerning the Administration of the Ordinance of Baptism  
and the Lord's Supper in our Societies.*

1. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall not be administered in any Chapel, except a majority of the Trustees of that Chapel, on the one hand, and the majority of the Stewards and Leaders belonging to that Chapel, as the best qualified to give the sense of the people, on the other, allow it. Nevertheless, in all cases, the consent of Conference shall be first obtained before this Ordinance shall be administered.

2. Where there is a Society, but no Chapel, if the majority of the Stewards and Leaders of that Society testify in writing, to the Conference, that it is the wish of the people, that the Lord's Supper should be administered among them, and that no separation will be made thereby, their desire shall be granted.

3. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall not be administered to a Society in a private house, within two miles of a Methodist Chapel.

4. The Lord's Supper shall be administered by the Superintendent only, or such of his helpers as are in full connexion, and as he shall appoint, provided that no Preacher be required to give it against his own inclination; and should it be granted to any place where the Preachers on the Circuit are unwilling to give it, the Superintendent shall, in that case, invite a neighbouring Preacher, who is properly qualified to give it.

5. It shall be administered at such time and in such manner as the Conference shall appoint. And the Conference agree that the Lord's Supper shall be administered among us on Sunday evenings only; except the majority of the Stewards and Leaders desire it in church-hours; or where it has already been administered in those hours. Nevertheless, it shall never be administered on those Sundays on which it is administered in the parish-church.

6. The Lord's Supper shall always be administered in England according to the form of the Established Church: but the person who administers shall have liberty to give out hymns, to use exhortation, and extemporary prayer.

7. Wherever the Lord's Supper shall be administered, according to the above-mentioned regulations, it shall always be continued, except the Conference order otherwise.

8. No person shall be suffered, on any pretence, to partake of the Lord's Supper among us, unless he be a Member of Society, or receive a note of admission from the Superintendent, (or the Preacher administering,) which Note must be renewed quarterly. And if any Leaders, Stewards, or Trustees, refuse

to be regulated by this Rule, the Sacrament shall not be administered where this is the case.

9. The administration of Baptism and the Burial of the Dead, shall be determined according to the Regulations above-mentioned respecting the Lord's Supper.

I very respectfully and seriously ask the whole Conference and Connexion of Wesleyan Methodists throughout the world, WHY are these Regulations, so demonstrably founded upon the principle of (excuse the mere expression) Church-attachment-ship, continued in our Class Books? I am confident you cannot, in the present state of the Connexion, give me a more satisfactory answer than this—We wish to keep alive amongst our members a proper sense of regard to our original principles and usages, and to accommodate, as far as possible, all our official members, both as it respects Churchism and Dissent.

But of what real service are these rules to the Methodist Connexion now? As a Connexion we not only have nothing to do with the Church, but thousands of our people say we *ought* to have nothing to do with it. And if these are in the right, why does not the Conference forbid the insertion of these church and sacrament regulations—or, why not at once permit ourselves to be recognized and denominated *Dissenters*?

Here, again, is our dilemma—we neither dare nor wish to offend the multitudes of our people, who are, in *principle*, members of the Church of England.

We have yielded as much to our dissenting members as we think they can reasonably desire, and must now proceed upon the principle of mutual accommodation. But this principle of accommodation appears to me to be made up, partly of Christian forbearance, and partly of unchristian cowardice. What now, if I, with all my insignificance, should attempt to perform

the duties of my office as superintendent, according to the instructions given me in my Book of Minutes at the time of my reception into full Connexion in 1829 ? —a book requiring me to exhort all our people to keep close to church and sacrament, and to set the example by going to church *myself* ? Should I not be regarded as a madman ? It is extremely likely. But mad or not, I should be a *consistent* Wesleyan Superintendent. To be *consistent*, then, we really must, as a religious body, make some reasonable and profitable *use* of our church-loving documents, or for ever expunge them from our official publications.

These, then, are our real difficulties as to the matter of *consistency*. How are we to get out of them without agitation and injury ?

A wiser man than myself must determine.

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#### A HARMLESS SOLILOQUY.

The Church, or not the Church, that is the question !  
 Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to *suffer*  
 The stings and arrows of methodistical dissent ;  
 Or to take arms against these methodistic troubles,  
 And, by retirement, end them ? To leave,—to say,—  
 No more ; and, by silence, to say I end  
 The heart-ache, and the thousand shocks  
 That *Wesleyan* flesh is heir to,—'tis a consummation,  
 But *hardly* to be wish'd. To leave ;—not preach ;—  
 Not preach ! perchance to doubt ;—ay, there's the rub :  
 For in that doubt of sin what dreads may come,  
 When I have shuffled off this mortal coil,  
 Must give me pause : There's the respect,  
 That makes *vexation* of so long life :  
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,  
 The Connexion's frown, the Radicals' contumely,  
 The pangs of true Wesleyism, the Minutes' wrong,  
 The oddities of office, and the spurns  
 That patient merit of the dissenter takes,

When he himself might his quietus make  
 With a bare letter ?\* Who would fardels bear,  
 To grunt and sweat under a preaching life ;  
 But that the dread of guilt in any silent life,  
 The uncertain state, from whose bourn  
 So few have safe return,—puzzles the will ;  
 And makes me rather bear those ills I have,  
 Than fly to others which I know not of ?  
 Thus conscience does make cowards of us all ;  
 And thus the native hue of resolution  
 Is sicklied o'er with a pale cast of thought ;  
 And an enterprize† of vast pith and moment,  
 With this regard, its current turns away,  
 And has no more of action.

\* Of Resignation to the President.

† Seeking by Lectures or otherwise to effect a union between the Church and the Methodists.

## AN IMPORTANT QUESTION.

What can induce a Methodist Minister in an age like the present, and with a decent support and advantages for usefulness, to wish for such a thing as Episcopal Ordination ?

To this question I will give a full and distinct reply ; but I beg the reader to bear in mind that I am not *sure* that any of our preachers *do* wish the thing in question, at least not wish it in such a way as to be *anxious* about it. I proceed therefore on *supposition*. A Methodist Minister may wish to be episcopally ordained from a bad motive or from a good one. He may wish it simply for the purpose of securing to himself the gratifications of polite, refined, and literary society ; knowing that such gratifications, except in

our principal cities and towns, can be had only on a very limited scale. And should his destiny be to travel for a long series of years in excessively laborious *walking* circuits, and in comparative wildernesses, he may with reason conclude himself at an almost immeasurable distance from the object of his wishes.

But even as to our most respectable places, where we have splendid chapels and genteel congregations, it will be granted, I presume, that according to English hereditary and established *notions* of gentility we cannot as a body be compared with the Churches of the Establishment.

This consideration may so mortify a man of little piety and great vanity as to make him sigh for the elegances of *high* clerical life. The costume, accommodations, and associations of our National Church are very likely to appear, in the view of the vain divine, "a consummation devoutly to be wished." But I would qualify my censure even of such a man; for besides my conviction that vanity clings with an almost incorrigible obstinacy to human nature, so that not more than one man in ten millions is free from it, there are in the Methodist field of labour and toil, things sufficiently disagreeable to make a wish for ordination, even on this objectionable ground, a little excusable.

The peculiarities of the Wesleyan itinerancy are well known. It has its sweets and it has its bitters. In what are accounted the best circuits, while there is plenty of labour there are many solid pleasures, private and social, temporal and spiritual. In the very worst of circuits a man of a patient and contented mind may find sources of comfort and causes of gratitude. But

eleven years' experience constrains the writer to affirm that no ordinary measure of divine grace is needed to bear with tolerable composure those "ills" which Methodist "flesh is heir to." We will not murmur if we can help it, but we may touch upon some matters which are anything but consoling.

The stationing committee, then, finding it impossible to fix every preacher according to his mind, or conceiving it inexpedient to pay attention to every individual remonstrance or imploration, will occasionally give a man a British journey of some five or six hundred miles to a circuit, which, when he arrives at, he must be something more than man if he does not wish himself any sort of preacher on earth rather than a *travelling* preacher. And should the man be one of those peculiarly interesting and agonizing personages, designated with most dreadful soul-harrowing propriety, "*poor gentleman*," he may find his finances exhausted at the end of his journey—nay, possibly, in the very *middle* of it. Those horrible things called "*incidental expenses*" have made many a good man's eyes (when left alone to his ponderings) "a fountain of tears."

Preachers *must* not—they *dare* not appear like vagrants: they have a character and characteristic propriety to support. But how *is it to be* supported in every time and place? Come, now, don't be in a hurry reader, and don't be censorious, but as good tempered as possible, and I will indulge my characteristic propensity for a moment or two, by relating to you a very short account of an Itinerant Evangelist. "There was once upon a time," (dear antiquated phrase) a preacher, who, with a wife and child, was appointed to go from the soft regions of the South to



visit and settle among the inhabitants of North Caledonia. They might have settled near home, being officially invited to do so. But *Providence*, as we say, ordered otherwise. Having settled their affairs and bid farewell to Phœbe, a "good and faithful servant," whose eyes were well nigh inflamed with weeping, parting as she was with their precious infant, (which she loved with vast tenderness) never expecting to see her more.—They put to sea with a kind captain in a brig bound for Shields. No wind for many hours, and then a contrary one, which tossed them about for a couple of days on the German ocean, during which their sickness was excessively violent. They put on shore, stayed a day or two, and got to sea again in a steamer. The wind still contrary they had two more days and nights of dreadful unabating sickness. On shore again, and being sick of sea-sickness they took a coach which brought them to Newcastle—and here, after hospitable entertainment, they again, as Bunyan says, "addressed themselves to their journey." But in what fashion? Even thus. The wife and infant must go forward and the husband stay behind to play the pedestrian. It may easily be imagined there were weighty *reasons* for this unusual arrangement.

The wife and child started. The latter (suffering much pain) cried and shrieked most of the way to Edinburgh, where they were kindly entertained. And then at sea again—tempestuous weather—fearful sickness—and when leaving the vessel so tremendous were the wind and waves that death seemed to threaten them every instant. They got into the boat, the infant lying at the bottom half drowned, no one daring for a while to move an inch to touch it for fear of all being in-

stantly overwhelmed and lost in "the mighty waters." In this most appalling situation had they to be rowed two miles, the people on shore filled with terror at the sight of them; at length they reached the harbour, being saved from destruction by a miracle of God's loving kindness and tender mercy.

The preacher started from Newcastle the same day his wife left him, intending to *walk* two hundred and sixty-four miles. To perform this task he had cash to the amount of *nine shillings and sixpence*, and with this *sum* of money he started. That day he walked, with a clumsy travelling bag, twenty-four miles. Stopped at an inn. Next morning walked eleven miles. In *direct* answer to prayer, a brother Minister *unasked* lent him a sovereign. This, with a cheap coach and other accommodations, pushed him on to Edinburgh, where he was kindly entertained.

A cheap coach and a forty miles' walk got him to Aberdeen. Another unasked loan of ten shillings, with a forty-six miles' walk, brought him to his new circuit. This circuit had its comforts and some slight inconveniences; viz. poverty and an occasional walk of forty miles. But away with complainings. I only add that a *series* of circuits in which incessant walking often in bad roads, and nearly as often in soaking rains, and winds and snow—lonely paths in the dismal darkness of the winter nights—occasional battles with huge and savage dogs—incidents, sometimes as romantic as those mentioned in the excursions of knight errantry, with other et ceteras of annoyance, may well make a vain man wish for an escape; yea, "wish to be a little higher;" "Suppose to be ordained." Thus I have shown that even bad motives for desiring

Episcopal Ordination are not without some plausible grounds of excuse. But this ordination may be desired from motives decidedly *good*. It is well known that with all the prime and commanding advantages of our itinerant system, it is by no means sufficiently favourable to the full establishment of the *Pastoral* character.

To a lively and zealous preacher not particularly fond of study and somewhat heedless of mental cultivation, the itinerant life is the most agreeable and the most favourable to his usefulness. But to a man loving to accumulate that he may *dispense* "things new and old,"—in short, to a *Pastor* after God's own heart, loving to feed his people with knowledge and understanding, *stationary* work,—not excluding village preaching,—is beyond comparison the most agreeable and the best.

It may be stated as a triumphant objection to these remarks, that the religious excitement resulting from the system of itinerancy, affording as that system does unceasing variety of ministers, is an advantage far surpassing the *new* and old things produced in a permanent pastorate. To this objection I reply, variety of *men* may please novelty-loving christians, and the fidgetty and fastidious are more likely to be gratified by this, than that which is of far greater consequence to solid edification,—variety of *matter*. But it will be said, Methodism has this too, and especially in the ministrations of our learned and eloquent preachers. Granted—yet men of discrimination can perceive a most important difference between the variety of miscellaneous ministrations, and the studied variety of a permanent and competent divine. The former variety is apt to bewilder and confound as well as to excite and

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gratify, and as to its extent it is, after all its attractions, very limited. We dwell in certain parts of the kingdom too much on general topics ;—occasionally anticipate, in the same chapel, one another's subjects, perhaps the very mode of treating them ;—repentance, faith, and holiness, which are doctrines and duties of incalculable importance, and ought to be most energetically preached where Christ has not been named, and associated more or less with our discourses, even to the converted, are apt to be introduced afresh by every new preacher in such a manner as *sometimes* to indicate the absence of discernment in the preacher's mind, not considering sufficiently the situation of an advanced christian, and the mere enquirer after religion ;—"The principles of the doctrine of Christ" are, in too many instances, reiterated without necessity, and our people, in many parts of the kingdom, are much in the rear of pious dissenters and evangelical church people as to a deep and extensive acquaintance with God's most holy word.

The latter variety which I have mentioned is more substantial. The people by it receive much more accurate and beneficial instruction. They are made to know by delightful experience that "*all* scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," that we "may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

The permanent minister, being intimate with his people, can with more certainty reach their necessities and experience in his sermons, as well as enlarge and enrich their minds by luminous and profitable expositions delivered in due course and order.

In this way, though precluded the advantage of spreading religion by travelling, he contributes largely to its growth and maturity in one particular place. He also qualifies his attentive and zealous hearers for spreading it in their instructive and exciting social conversation.

It does appear very clearly to the view of my own mind, that while young ministers, and those of inferior capabilities, and those who are fond of rambling, do immensely more service in *their* way by travelling, than they could if confined to one spot, studious ministers and well wearing sermonizers do much more good as settled pastors. Not that I would have them located for life—that is the *other* injurious extreme—but just as many years as they could keep up an interested and lively attention in their congregations, and be instrumental in promoting their conversion and sanctification.

In short, I conceive it to be one of the (perhaps unavoidable) *infirmities* of our system that it keeps men, irrespective of characteristic peculiarities and qualifications, *on the ramble for life*.

I mention further the work of “teaching from house to house.” This work cannot be done with anything like real effect in the extensive walking circuits, or indeed in any circuits, without the partial neglect of other important duties. Add to this the poor encouragement a man has to visit and get into the affections of a people from whom he must at the very longest so shortly remove.

Connected also with these reasons for desiring to be “ordained,” might be mentioned those *superior* advantages for promoting religion which clergymen possess by reason of that extensive *influence* which in

British society, through long established notions, usages, and hereditary etiquette, is allowed to them as an almost peculiar prerogative. Some uneasy men may growl at this and say,—“*wretched* system which makes a clergyman a gentleman to the exclusion of his betters.” Well, it is useless to grumble, we cannot demolish a system by complaining, and if we could the *job* would be (excuse a plebeian phrase) to build up a *better* in its place. The national clergy then *have* an influence, and in defiance of all reforming prognostications, we may rely upon it it will be maintained for generations to come. This influence then in the case of a Christian minister is a *talent*, so it was considered by pious Bishop Beveridge. It is innocent and commendable to *desire* this influence, if by it we have strong reasons to conclude we can more extensively serve God in our day and generation.

This exhibition of objections to our itinerant system will I fear offend some of my friends, and they may possibly denounce me as a new species of radical, but I assure them they may spare their fears and indignation, for I have neither will nor wickedness enough to upset a whole community for *my* accommodation. *No*. I thank my God, I am only a simple *suggester*—a harmless *remarker*. Agitate I cannot, I will not, except in my sacred office as a subverter of the kingdom of Satan, and an *Evangelical* reformer.

I conclude the discussion of this question by saying, that a desire for Ordination on whatever grounds, is only an occasional and rare thing among us, and where it exists it is so controlled as to be not the slightest hindrance whatever to the honorable and successful discharge of methodistical ministerial duty. I may further suppose that nothing short of circum-



stances, peculiar and extraordinary, would induce a Methodist preacher to desist travelling and become a stationary clergyman.

Still, however, all those preachers, who, like Mr. Wesley's first clerical assistants, desire to serve him as "sons in the Gospel," have reason to be confident, that as *they* did not for a moment contemplate *dissent* from the Establishment, so should not preachers now-a-days encourage dissent, but love the Church of England.

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## A NEEDFUL DIGRESSION.

### CHURCH AND STATE.

THE question respecting the civil establishments of Christianity is of too grave a nature to be discussed with any thing like interesting and convincing propriety within the short limits of a mere chapter, and, therefore, I shall not attempt to go into the subject elaborately. The reader, if disposed, may consult recent pamphlets on the subject, and amongst others I would recommend one published by Oliver and Boyd, and White and Co. Edinburgh, entitled "Account of a Meeting held at Arbroath, &c. in Defence of Church Establishments ;" and would just say, let good people first subvert the argumentation of this pamphlet, and *then* declaim against establishments. In the mean time I go on to offer for *myself*, a few sentences concerning the connexion of Church and State.

That considerable disadvantages have *accidentally* arisen from the civil establishments of Christianity, no well-informed Christian will attempt to deny. Nor is there any good man, whether connected or unconnected with these establishments, who does not ardently wish and pray for the removal of whatever tends to their dishonour. And whatever *improvements* might be made in them, so as to extend the range of their benefactions to every class of evangelical Ministers, would, I think, be hailed with general satisfaction and joy. But the *accidental disadvantages* of a religious establishment afford us no proof that *in its own nature* it is an *evil* and therefore should be abolished.

Setting aside, therefore, for brevity's sake, the numerous and powerful arguments which have been adduced in favour of these establishments, I would just touch upon one particular, which appears to me entitled to some consideration.

It is this. *The standard doctrines of the Church of England are in all fundamental points acknowledged to be Scriptural by an overwhelming majority of the British population.*

To adopt measures, therefore, for the *secure* maintenance of men to preach and perpetuate these doctrines must, in the nature of things, be a conduct on the part of our Government eminently praiseworthy.

It evidences a recognition of the fact that pure Christianity is of infinite *service* to the temporal and spiritual welfare of the community; and it expresses a noble determination that those individuals who from fastidiousness, conceit, or downright infidelity, will not *readily* comply with measures for the support of

that faith which the great majority allow to be eminently beneficial, shall be obliged to do so. So far, then, the exercise of legislative authority, for the determined support of the Christian faith, must be *not an evil*, but a real and invaluable blessing; and may we not with propriety add here, that if men are commanded by an inspired Apostle to hold themselves in subjection to "the powers that be" with regard to laws generally considered, how much more reasonable is it that subjection should be yielded to *that* law which commands the propagation of pure and undefiled religion. But we are incessantly assailed with the objection that Christianity would support itself without legislative interference, for it did so in the days of the Apostles. To this objection I reply—no man can prove that Christianity would not have been promoted much more *extensively*, if the Government authorities, by whom St. Paul and his co-adjutors were persecuted, had given them encouragement and support.

I observe again,—It is well known that the state of society in the days of St. Paul was widely different from what it is at present. Christianity was then a *new* religion opposing the pride and extravagances of heathenism and infidelity.

The opposition to it was fierce and demoniacal, and its progress decidedly *miraculous*. Its progress was not owing simply to its own nature, but to the *miraculous powers* which were vouchsafed to its defenders. But in our days, the extraordinary commendations of christianity included in miracles are altogether wanting. It is therefore reasonable that the need of them should be supplied by ordinary and probable expedients.

*Apart*, therefore, from all abuses of power and merely *accidental* disadvantages, it is easy for an un-

prejudiced christian to perceive that the civil establishments of christianity are in the most perfect harmony with the dictates of reason and the positive injunctions of holy writ.

As to the *advantages* of these Establishments, they are numerous and important. One of the most prominent is—they *secure* to the community instruction in the great doctrines and duties of our Holy Religion.

This point of argument has been repeatedly and excellently illustrated. I would, therefore, crave permission to observe, that in addition to the more positive and conspicuous advantages arising from the Establishments in question, there are others less direct and obvious to inattentive minds, but which are not without their degree of consequence and weight.

First, then, these Establishments have from time to time furnished to the world Preachers and authors, whose public ministrations and writings have most powerfully contributed to the wide diffusion of Christian knowledge and piety.

It will be said, and perhaps with a sneer, that *this* is no argument, for Dissenting Churches have done the same.

But I would fearlessly ask, who among the mighty champions of sacred eloquence and literature, furnished by Dissenters, are to be compared to a Sherlock, a Taylor, a Clark, a Tillotson, a Barrow, a Campbell, a Chalmers, and many others, which time forbids us to enumerate? I know this is a hacknied argument, but it is a good one. Let the *sound* Christian scholar, let the *solid* biblical critic, compare the generality of English and Scottish divines of the Establishments, with the choice men among the Dissenters, and he will find

amongst the former, clearness of conception—accuracy of expression—solidity—a clear and transparent current of thought—broad day light in the discovery of truth, with various et ceteras of excellence. Amongst the latter, excepting a few superior ones, writers with many excellences and many defects—many words and little sense—intolerable tediousness—confusion of ideas—and, in too many instances, an ostentatious and perfectly unnecessary display of learning—occasionally, too, a pitiful *affectation* of it.

Now, I say that the former divines have largely, powerfully, much more powerfully than *others*, contributed to the dissemination of Christian knowledge and piety ;—or suppose you will force me to give up this assertion by pointing my attention with a triumphant air to the glorious doings of Dissenters and Methodists in the revivals of the last century, and make me contrast *these* with the miserable torpor of Britain as to religion, under the instructions and ministry of the men I have named ; *then*, giving you, out of mere good nature, all the advantages of your “ say so,” I turn round upon you and affirm that the revivals of which you speak were effected by the instrumentality of men who cultivated their minds and increased their qualification for the Ministry by the study of the authors referred to, or else authors of the same school.

Mr. John Wesley never would have been such a preacher and such a writer had he not deeply studied the works of our venerable Establishment men. But having got his mind well stored by a sanctified study of Church of England divines, he, under the influence of God, commenced a glorious series of operations, and set to work a mighty machinery or agency, which, under the blessing of the most High, produced the vast

moral renovation contained in Methodism ; and so of Whitfield and others.

The great *leaders* of great revivals, while of course deriving their great inclinations to their work and impetus to the prompt and laborious performance of it from the Holy Ghost, fetched their subordinate implements from the store house of Church of England divinity. I am sorry I cannot stay to enlarge here, but must hurry on to observe—

Secondly. That these Establishments render the pious Ministers belonging to them so far independent of hopes and fears from the favour and displeasure of their people, that they can and do “ declare the whole counsel of God.”

This is done to a certain extent by Dissenters. Men of *eminent* talents among them can take such liberties with the consciences of their hearers, as middling and inferior men are often afraid to do. And why afraid ? Because they would be in danger of a dismissal. In the establishments, a good pastor need be under no apprehensions of this kind ; and on this account it is that we generally find much more of plain dealing, close, practical, conscience-touching preaching among the *evangelical* clergy than amongst the dissenters. I have travelled pretty extensively in different parts of Britain, for the last 12 years, and have heard numerous preachers in church and chapel, and must declare, that for one faithful, rousing, penetrating minister among the dissenters, I have found at least three in the establishments of England and Scotland.

Very many dissenting and even Methodist pastors seem to forget that the *true* ministers of Christ are bound, in their public preaching and private admonitions, to use an unconfined liberty of speech, to exhort

to the practice of virtue, as our Saviour did, with license and authority. To deter from vice, as St. Paul enjoins Titus, with an all-commanding and imperious strain. They are obliged (says Barrow) to deal impartially with all; to flatter no man; to admonish and reprove the greatest of men; not to respect the persons of the rich, nor to dread the faces of the most terrible among men. And how shall this commanded courage be engendered, be cherished, be preserved in the breast of him who is either under the dominion of official church members, or depressed and straitened with pecuniary difficulties. But admit it possible that a man under humiliating circumstances, may be resolute in his duty. With what regard shall his free and faithful advice be entertained?

“Will not his moderate confidence be accounted impudence—his open sincerity of speech be styled unmannerly presumption?”

Will great men of this world be patiently reproved by him whom they regard as so much their inferior? No. Weak and ineffectual are the most eloquent harangues of poor dependent and *peoply*-ridden preachers.

If the preacher's *condition* be not, as well as his pulpit, somewhat elevated, few will hear him, fewer mind his words, very few obey him. I say that the voluntary scheme has a *tendency* to cramp the energies of a bold anti-hypocritical piety and zeal, by making preachers afraid of their people and restraining them from that kind of preaching, which, as it comes the nearest to the manner of Jesus Christ and his Apostles, is most decidedly the best adapted to the conversion of the ungodly, and the sanctification of the true Christian.

Establishments put it into the power of every good Minister to “warn the unruly,” to “rebuke them sharply,” however elevated in rank, and that without danger of forfeiting his temporal support.

I wish, therefore, the reformation and improvement, but not the subversion of ecclesiastical establishments; and while I acknowledge the voluntary scheme to have some real excellences, I could wish it would make good its claim to *universal* support, by furnishing us with preachers who, so far as the *souls* of men are concerned, will be as faithful with the rich as with the poor, with the great as with the small, and who in the discharge of *every* official duty will show themselves imitators of that divine Lord and Master who is “no respecter of persons.”

I conclude this article by saying, I have little or no hope of its changing the mind of a voluntary. It will, in all probability, by some be regarded with disdain. But no matter. I have “shown mine opinion,” and, had my time and circumstances allowed of such a thing, I could have swelled this chapter into a volume—but to what purpose? When men *make up their minds* “reason cannot hurt them,” argument cannot convince them.

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### EXTEMPORARY PRAYER.

The principal advantage of extemporary prayer appears to me to be the devotional excitement which it occasions by its customary fervour and variety of expression.



Whether so or not it *seems* to come from the heart and to reach the hearts of many who listen to it. And I am willing to allow that it *is* in general what it seems to be.

But extemporary prayer has its *defects*, and those, too, of considerable magnitude. The very best of extemporary prayers, with all their attractions and recommendations, do so exercise the invention of the speaker, and suspend the judgment of the hearer, as to occasion considerable *interruption* to devotional feeling. While the mind is engaged in an exercise similar to that of an author in *composing*, the *affections* cannot be profitably excited until the thing about to be said *is* said.

And suppose I allow that the substance or matter of what a person intends to address to the Almighty is all in his thoughts before he begins to pray, still he has to invent *expressions*, and until these expressions are actually invented and fairly out, he can neither feel himself nor excite feeling in others.

Again, let no candid Christian deny the fact, that extemporary prayers are not unfrequently irregular, incoherent, and sometimes even unintelligible. And yet these very prayers shall be *applauded* by boisterous and indiscriminate responses, under a notion of their proceeding from the Spirit of God! Alas, can men so flatter themselves in their self-complacent notions of their personal spirituality, as to think that the infinitely wise and holy God does at any time dictate absurdities!

I am not censuring mere verbal inaccuracies, or the infirmities of God's people, but I do complain of those wild and fanatical petitions and exclamations, (which it has often been my affliction to hear,) which are

so far from tending to edification, that they create in every sober and humble mind, the most painful disgust. Such wildness, however, is but too often the result of an extravagant fondness for mere extemporary prayer. I am happy to say that this wildness is not observable amongst the eminently pious and well-instructed members of our body ; but it ought not to have an existence amongst any.

Now, as to *Forms* of Prayer, and in particular the Liturgy. What scriptural objections have we to urge against it ? The common complaints of its length, its repetitions, its inducement to dulness and formality, allowing them (which I do *not*) to be just, are not sufficiently solid to encourage its disuse. The Liturgy, in my view, commands the veneration and affection of every well-instructed and right-hearted Christian. Some little peculiarities in it may be deemed objectionable, but as a whole, it is scriptural in doctrine, comprehensive and beautiful in its variety, and also deeply affecting in its hallowed and heavenly spirit. All that we have to do in worshipping God through the medium of this Liturgy, is to apply our *hearts* to its expressions while we repeat them ; and if we cannot do this, let us be admonished that it is not the *love* of devotion, but the *want* of it, which makes us wish to have it superseded by mere extemporary worship.

It may be said, that the human mind really wants variety to keep up a stimulus in devotion. But I ask, does extemporary prayer uniformly furnish us with this variety ? The reply may be “ Yes,—and especially when the Spirit is poured out, or when the person praying has, in a remarkable degree, the *gift* of prayer.” I ask,—and what then ? Do you not perceive that this variety pertains either to the

things said, or to the manner of saying them, or it may be to both. Still, I ask, where is the *advantage*, when the true *nature and design* of prayer are considered?

As to *things*. The Liturgy, I apprehend, expresses all that it is proper for man to ask, or suitable to the nature of God to give, certainly all that it is proper to say in *public* devotion.

If this be true, then, the boasted advantages of *extemporary* variety are reduced to mere words and phrases. And allowing all the benefit of the fact that even *words* that are new or fresh have sometimes a power and impressiveness in them, I want to know if it can be shown that *God* is better pleased with new expressions than with old ones, when it is granted the old ones cannot be improved, and when they express the same things? Is it to be supposed that our mere *eloquence* can affect the Almighty, and secure *His* commendation? I apprehend not.

This we may cheerfully allow, that on sudden and particular emergencies, such as sudden calls to visit the sick and the dying, or the being in any place for devotional purposes under circumstances not anticipated, the eloquence of extemporary prayer adapting itself to cases particular and extraordinary, is often found acceptable to God and profitable to man. But this, it will be perceived, affects not my argument, which concerns *public* devotion. And now as to *this*. Do we not know that our prayers, though extemporary, are on the whole the *same* as forms? In public prayer it is necessary to say certain things not once merely, but always. And we know, that notwithstanding our extemporaneous powers, we often say these things in the *same words*, and that if we try to substitute other

words, we minister more to our vanity than our devotional feelings.

Again, are we not enjoined by an Apostle to "speak to ourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody in our hearts to the Lord?"—and what are these, but forms of praise, or *forms of singing*. Being either words which we *read* while we sing, or which we have gotten by heart. Surely there is as much reason to object to the use of psalms and hymns, because they are in a *book*, as to object to prayers on that account. But if we will have *nothing but* extemporary prayer, then, to be consistent, we should have nothing but extemporary praise or singing.

I would not discourage extemporary prayer (using it as I do *myself*, partly from choice, partly from necessity,—so much for the state of things *forcing* me from my favourite Liturgy), but I am desirous of showing the unreasonableness of allowing it to *supersede* a substantial and edifying form, such as our national "common prayer." The Church of Scotland, and Dissenters throughout our land (with the exception of Lady Huntingdon's followers), have done themselves serious injury by the rejection of this beautiful Liturgy. I am not afraid of my assertion being *disproved*, although, as matter of course, it will be *denied*. What! are intelligent congregations to depend for the benefit of their public devotions on the expressions of *one* solitary man when, but for unreasonable prejudices, they might have the very edifying and devotional advantage of several through the medium of our Liturgy? And are they sometimes curtailed of their customary allowance of devotional edification, by listening to the indigested and indigestible prayers of an ungifted divine? *Yes*. Many a good man has been

criticised and complained of, because of his ill-arranged and objectionable prayers.

Connected with these remarks I have another to make, and that is:—From the common-place talk among Methodists and Dissenters concerning “gifts” in prayer, and from the popularity some acquire by being what is called “very fine” in prayer, it is much to be feared that that very exercise which in its true and proper nature illustrates human littleness, and misery and helplessness, and guilt, and which should ever put us in mind, as it did Abraham and Job, that we are “dust and ashes,” and even “vile” before God, is made a medium through which human vanity is sometimes greatly fostered. To talk of *fine* and *splendid* gifts in *prayer*, as we would talk of fine speeches, or the splendid spouting of the theatrical fop, is truly shocking. But such are occasionally the abuses of gifts for extemporary prayer, and of gifts for *admiring* it.

Hear the words of a pious divine, who left the world above 160 years ago. “I am not ashamed,” says he, “to acknowledge, that upon emergencies, I have indulged myself the liberty of my own measures, and I found a vehement heat in myself for the time, my affections over-running their banks: and if I did casually hit upon any pertinent, winning, and melting words, I was ready to flatter and hug the felicity of my own rhetoric, by which it clearly appears to me, that there is a serpent lurking under those leaves, or specious pretences for extemporary prayer, especially, when we do *velificare*, or make a flourish in public, by turning the pulpit into the hypocrite’s theatre. We are then more apt to seek our own glory, than the glory of Him that sent us. For in private, there is com-

monly not so much heat attending our extemporary prayers, which is no small evidence that vain glory is at one end of them."

I must come to a close on this topic by observing, that thousands of *Methodists* are injured, though they think it not, by putting our extemporary services "in the *room* of" the Church service. In a vast number of our Chapels, in country places, we have either *no* service on the precious hours of a Sabbath forenoon, or a service, in which the officiating Preacher, though well-meaning, is a raw, uncultivated young man, whose prayers not only do not take in *all* the grand parts of public prayer, but are pitifully incoherent and superficial; yet, notwithstanding this great disadvantage, many of our Methodists will not go to Church, though a Church should be close at hand—the Minister of it pious, and in principle a Methodist! and, what is still further objectionable, the habit of late attendance among us as a people, prevents the benefit even of the *defective* prayers just alluded to.

Again, the main thing with mere chapel-goers is the *sermon*, hence the phrase—"we are going," not to worship God, but "to hear preaching; or, to hear Mr. such an one, they say he is a *clever* man," &c. &c. Persons of this description I have known to be as restless and irreverent during even a short prayer, as the veriest worldling in our defamed Churches.

Finally, I remark, that as the Liturgy admits of a short extemporary prayer before and after the sermon, the objections to it are reduced to a still greater degree of unreasonableness and insignificance. I condemn no Christians for extemporary worship, but I like not to hear its excellences preposterously magnified, and forms of prayer as preposterously con-

demned. The more I think of the matter, the stronger is my conviction that *both* ways are immensely preferable to either of them exclusively.

I might here add that of late years divines even in *Scotland* (so renowned for its almost superstitious horror of forms) have published various manuals of devotion, both for the family and the closet, and they have done wisely in this. For what are thousands of poor ignorant creatures to do who *cannot* pray extempore, if they have not at least the assistance of well-constructed and scriptural forms of prayer. Gift or no gift, we *must* all pray, and if we cannot pray without a book we should pray with one. At the same time I would have it distinctly borne in mind by the candid reader, that the more we live in the *Spirit* of devotion the less shall we need human helps, either as to matter or expression.

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### SHORT SUGGESTIONS FOR A UNION OF THE WESLEYAN METHODISTS WITH THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

I. LET the Bishops ordain all eligible and willing travelling preachers.

II. Let all suitable Methodist chapels be consecrated.

III. Let arrangements be made for the employment and maintenance of such travelling preachers as upon examination shall be found incompetent to the work of stationary pastorship.

IV. Let all accredited local preachers be employed

as at present, with the exception of not preaching in consecrated chapels.

V. Let all *competent*\* local preachers be encouraged to accept of Ordination, if offered to them.

VI. Let Class Meetings, Prayer Meetings, and all the peculiarities of Methodism be carried on under such modifications, as while not at all counteracting their original design, may be deemed essential to harmony and brotherly love.

VII. Let the Methodist and Church Missionary Societies be united in their funds, plans, and operations.

VIII. Let arrangements be made for the security of the funds, both of the Church and the Methodists, in such a way as still to admit of and encourage the liberality of the people, and at the same time comfortably to maintain the Ministers and extend the work of God.

IX. Let Conferences meet as usual (if deemed necessary), and let one of the Bishops, per courtesy, at least, be sometimes invited to preside.

X. Let all mere church attenders who are obviously irreligious, though calling themselves members of the Church of England, be accounted *no* members,—and however rich or imperious, be totally disregarded in framing this union,—seeing the *people* of God are the fittest instruments to accomplish union in the *Church* of God.

These suggestions will, doubtless, be smiled upon by many people, with no ordinary degree of contempt, and to others afford topics for amusement. No matter. I choose, while writing on the side of that Christianity which *everywhere* enjoins unity, and *nowhere* allows of division amongst Christian believers,

\* We have some local preachers that are gentlemen of superior education.



to speak out, come what will, and though fully aware of the at present extreme improbability of Methodism and Churchism becoming as one, in this or any other way, yet I wish to give my *hints*, which men may receive or reject at their pleasure. Most certain am I, that the Established Church gains nothing by its separation from us, and we gain nothing by *preferring* an absolute renunciation of all connexion with the Established Church. But there are those who think that the progress, improvements, attractiveness, and at least partial splendour of Methodism, indicate an approach to a state of things in which the Methodist Connexion itself shall be considered as the Church of England! and in such a case we should be careful of courting alliance with the *present* Establishment.

Now, I rejoice and exult in the present prosperity and respectability of Methodism, but I wish to be excused from indulging in extraordinary anticipations.

I must conclude. My revered fathers and brethren are, for the most part, lovers of the Church of England, but to avoid disputations and preserve the peace of the body, deem it wise to be silent about the Church; and I should most heartily concur with them in this well-intended conduct, were I not most distressingly persuaded from what I certainly know of some thousands of Methodists, that their church-hating principles will, ere long, if not abandoned, break out like a conflagration, and terribly deface, if not destroy, the noble fabric of our beloved Connexion.

As an individual, I have no hope whatever of preferment in the Establishment, and as to ordination, with all the talk I have made about it, I am not sure, that should it be offered to me, I could stand a rigid examination on the score of literature. Yet I do so-

lemnly protest, before God, and angels, and men, that sooner than encourage, by means direct or indirect, those *principles*, or those *notions*, whose vigorous operations *tend* alike to the mutilation and destruction both of Methodism and the Church of England, I would preach the Gospel in sackcloth, and diet on the roots and herbage of the field.

I have grievously suffered already, because I allow no Methodist to snarl at the Church without a faithful rebuke. What I have yet to suffer is best known to Him whose I am and whom I serve.

But if any man or body of men will seek to annihilate my affection to that Church, many of whose writers I doat upon with unmingled affection,—that Church, which has so effectually reduced to subordination the intolerance of Popery, the blasphemy of infidelity, and the pertinacity and conceit of wrong-headed obstinate fanaticism,—that Church which, with all its faults, has produced, in addition to an army of other eminently learned and eminently good men, a *Wesley* and a *Fletcher*, and is still blessing us with laborious prelates and clergymen, whose writings and preachings are penetrating in various directions the dense masses of ignorance and wickedness which pollute our land, and turning men from darkness to light,—I must first be deposed as a Minister, and then as a Christian, and lastly, as a man. I am sensibly aware how easy it would be to break the force of these commendations by voluble counter-statements and declamation, as for instance—That Church which has fostered pride,—oppressed the pious,—countenanced error,—amassed wealth,—ruined souls, &c. The charity of the New Testament, however, prefers to dwell upon whatsoever things are pure and lovely and of good report, and

*thinks* upon *these* things; and as to corruptions, show me a church or community on earth that is free from them! and show me also the reason why so many of our *Dissenting* Ministers, after having taken their full share in denouncing the corruptions of the Establishment, have eagerly *gone into it* as soon as the Prelacy opened the door? As to principles of *government*, as well ecclesiastical as political, I place confidence in *no* man, and no man who is wise will place confidence in himself; for if interest bribe not, conscience may alter the judgment, and thus justify alterations both in opinion and practice.

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## APPENDIX.

### ARTICLE I.

IT may surprise some persons, that in my zeal for the Church of England, I have not noticed those objectionable *expressions* in the Baptismal, Confirmation, and Burial Services. On this point, I beg to say

1st. That whatever may be objectionable in these services, they form no part of Sunday Worship.

2nd. That Church Ministers themselves differ in opinion as to their true interpretation.

3rd. Church-people have been charged with believing what many of them do *not* believe, in reference to these expressions.

4th. These expressions are sufficiently well explained in the writings of the Church of England

Divines, to which writings, persons sufficiently interested in the subject may easily refer.

5th. That so far as objections to the Church of England itself, on the ground of these expressions, are concerned, similar objections might be made to all other Religious Communities, as in all Books of Standards, Books of Hymns, &c., *very* objectionable expressions are to be found.

6th. Nothing but want of time, and pecuniary means, prevent me from undertaking a patient and full discussion of the expressions referred to.

7th. These expressions did not make Mr. Wesley and the original Methodists, Dissenters.

#### ARTICLE II.—FACTS.

FACT 1.—In a certain town in Lancashire an eminent and pious Clergyman, not Calvinistic in his views, sought on honourable terms a friendly alliance with the Methodists in his parish. The Methodists rejected his proposals, and censured their own Minister for having intercourse with him.

Was this conduct Wesleyan Methodism ?

FACT 2.—The writer of this book went on a certain Sunday, by appointment, to preach in a certain chapel. The inclemency of the weather prevented all but five or six persons (principally trustees) from attending; after waiting a very long time, and nobody coming, I proposed going to the Church, which was only a few yards from the place, and in which a good Clergyman officiated. My proposal was not consented to, and I held a short service, these five or six men making up the whole of my congregation. After this service *one* of the good men, by persuasion, went with me to Church, just in time to hear a most excellent

sermon on Christian holiness. Was the *refusal to go to Church*, when we could have no regular worship at the chapel, and when the clergyman was acknowledged by *themselves* to be a good man, Wesleyan Methodism? Was it not rather a species of Sabbath-breaking?—Most *decidedly*.

Do men tell me that Methodists, with such peculiarities, are very rarely to be found?—I reply, they are numerous, and they are in some instances stubborn—a few I have known even insulting; and yet these persons are to say and do as they please, and a Methodist preacher, who speaks well of the *Church*, must be dictated to and gravely lectured about the importance of keeping quiet, minding his duty, and I know not what.

How very much could I enlarge here. But I have already exceeded my previously intended limits, and close my appendix by saying I have by no means availed myself of *every* point of argument and illustration which has offered itself on the subject before me; but I have done a little in my way to show that improvements may be made, and should be made, in Methodism and in the Establishment, to secure and perpetuate Christian affection, and promote by *this* means as well as others, the honour and glory of God. Certain I am, from a careful consideration of the subject, that no obstacles to a better understanding on our parts with the Church of England, or on the part of the Church of England with us, have any existence but in long established prejudices and disordered imaginations.

The essential doctrines of the Prayer Book are taught in every Methodist Chapel, and the essential doctrines of Methodism are in the Book of Common Prayer. And although some of the clergy teach Cal-

vanism, yet, all with whom I have been intimate, preach "*our* doctrines;" they have not indeed our exact phraseology, but they teach what we call *Methodism*. I believe all, or nearly all, the Bishops and the Archbishops are on our side, as to the Calvinistic controversy. And as to class meetings, I never knew a pious clergyman who had their nature and tendency clearly and cleverly explained to him, who did not approve of them. I could tell of some who *have* such meetings.

One word more. Let my respected Methodist friends all over the world, be cautious *never* to admit an opinion which I know is fondly indulged by *some* of them, viz. that *Methodists* are the only persons in whom *marks of conversion* and *clearness of Christian experience* are to be found. There is reason to believe that the doctrines of the Methodists are taught, and the experience of the Methodists is realized, in many a parish Church, although Church people make no formal proclamation of these things before the public.

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## MUSINGS.

### THE TENDENCY OF CHURCHISM TO METHODISM.

PIOUS prelates and other distinguished clergymen there are, who, perceiving the immense advantages obtained over the dominion of popular vice by the laborious "in season and out of season" Wesleyans, recommend to the subordinate clergy a partial imita-

tion of their practices. Hence the writer is acquainted with some clergymen who preach on week days and nights in private houses and school rooms. The recently instituted "Pastoral Aid Society" is also a bold approach towards Methodism. Many clergymen also *would*, were it not for certain scruples and certain fears about such a procedure being deemed degrading, institute class meetings. These meetings have been much misrepresented; their excellences, however, when *properly managed*, are demonstrable, and have been, by a *few* clergymen at least, recognized and adopted.

#### THE TENDENCY OF METHODISM TO CHURCHISM.

Not only does our beloved Liturgy continue to be read in numbers of our magnificent church-looking chapels, where we have splendid organs, beadles, and other et ceteras of comfort, but we have our Prayer Books and Oxford University Bibles elegantly bound up with our Wesley's Hymns. We have also given publicity to the "Church of England Magazine."

Surely, if *as a body* we affected the overpowering knowingness of theoretic dissent, the *Prayer Book* and *University Bible* would be bound up with any book, or no book, rather than our favourite *Hymn* book. Other tendencies there are but I mention them not.

Now I do *admire* these tendencies. I glory in them. But I wish to have them improved. I want to have the pious clergy much less *reserved*,—less encumbered with the etiquette of British *caste*,—more noble in their thinkings, and in their doings, with regard to Methodism. Why should the mere *nickname* of a vast influential body, such as the Wesleyans, keep them

from a free and generous intercourse with us? Why should the scowl of a high Church Baronet, or the sneer of a brother Oxonian or Cantab, standing tiptoe on terms of gentlemanship, fancied propriety, and I know not what,—deprive them of that companionship with the Methodists, of which some of the greatest of men, not excluding even Royalty itself, have been (in a good sense) even proud?

On the other side, I say,—Why should the *Wesleyans*, standing too much on terms of dissenting independency, and influenced by that *pride* involved in the fear of *truckling*,—refuse to clergymen that respect to which, if good men, they are undoubtedly entitled? And why should we be afraid of formalizing, or carnalizing, or worldlyizing ourselves, by occasional attendance at Church? And why should the very reprehensible anti-Wesleyan thought be for a moment entertained, that church going would unmethodize us? If so, why did it not unmethodize our forefathers? And how came the Rev. John *Fletcher*, and that almost seraphic woman, his *wife*, to be two of the most eminent Methodists that ever breathed, while living and dying absolute members of the Church of England?

Do we not profess our hatred to Church bigotry? and shall we be unaware of the existence of *Chapel* bigotry? O let us be men, and Christians—followers of Wesley, and followers of our Saviour Jesus Christ. *Practicable coalition* should *now* be the watchword among the sentinels of Christ's Militant Church. Would to God that not only Methodists, but Evangelical *Dissenters of all sorts*, would make an effort to perceive the necessity of a Church Establishment, and the unspeakably glorious consequences that *would* result from a universal approval of it!



## AN AVERAGE PIOUS CLERGYMAN.

Is a sound scholar, loves his Greek Testament, is chaste, perspicuous and beautifully simple in his Sabbath-day discourses. Instructive, though not overfluent in his cottage lectures or occasional essays at extempore preaching. Serious and dignified in his manners. Well dressed. A *little* cautious in his intercourse with the resident Wesleyan Minister, so that the latter is inclined to think his friendship is *somewhat* in the shape of condescension. Coming to hear his brother Wesleyan preach is rather too much for one to expect, for there are *difficulties* in the way; but these are sometimes surmounted, and the parish priest will worship in one's sanctuary as well as vouchsafe his presence at one's festive board. The pious clergy, bating those common *butts* which make the shadework in the picture of us all, are a fine and amiable race of men.

## AN AVERAGE WESLEYAN MINISTER—AND BOLD CONCLUSION.

We are, it must be acknowledged, a most wonderful fraternity! Not so much of all *sorts* as of all sizes, both with respect to the body and the mind. We have men of superior learning and commanding elocution. And we have men *not* very learned and whose elocution is hardly Ciceronian. We have men of gigantic stature, and men that could easily "walk under the huge legs" of the famed Colossus. But an average man among us I take to be a blessing to this sinful world. He is sound in sense and judgment, has extensive information, knows much of men and things.

Picks up often a wonderful deal more knowledge than he wants in the way of *experience*. A good preacher, occasionally eloquent and impressive in no ordinary degree. As to the *nature of effects* resulting from his eloquence, he leaves Demosthenes behind him, and forcibly reminds one of the great Apollos. At a public missionary meeting he is in his element. The mere *scholar*, though from Oxford or Cambridge (if saved from lip-biting) is constrained to admire and applaud, and what is infinitely better to *feel* for the perishing souls of the heathen. But an average man in *some* departments of the field of labour is not without his grievances. Men may guess at these. Suffice it to say, that in this wide world there are many men who walk prodigious distances to preach on week nights in rooms and hovels. The parish Churches close at hand are standing empty. Why not *lend* them and let the peasants have some sound and rousing exhortations? The *state of things* most positively forbids. And although in some cases a dozen people in a close hot room listen to a sermon which would do honour to a British prelate it matters not. The Church is *consecrated*, the cottage theologian *un-ordained*, things must be as formerly, and the souls of men be lost—(*terrible* thought)—sooner than allow the smallest innovation. Do you say to me—Sir, the resident clergyman is competent to supply all the religious demands of his parish, and has no need of irregular assistance? I reply: It transports me with Christian joy to know that *some* parishes are well provided for; but as a travelling spectator, I am filled with dismal apprehensions for the safety of many of them, the spiritual condition of which is incomparably wretched. *Thus* does our average man complain; but this complaining

is founded on his personal *benevolence*. Christian philanthropy seeks to effect the *everlasting* happiness of human beings, and though it admires conservative laws and regulations, deplores as a fault truly terrific, every arrangement which, either directly or indirectly, prevents the conversion of sinful men to the faith and practice of Christianity.

If *Episcopal Ordination* be deemed requisite to spread rapidly and extensively the kingdom of our God in these realms, let the door way to it be widened ; and while a first-rate education, if associated with piety, is allowed to give a man a most decided advantage over his less informed neighbour for the arduous duties of the Christian Ministry, let not undue *stress* be laid upon it.

Experience and observation have for the last century, amply demonstrated, that *natural genius*, and a *love* for the work of preaching, with but very moderate scholastic attainments, have qualified a greater number of men to become "able Ministers of the New Testament," than the profoundest knowledge of Oriental and classic lore, abstracted from the requisite "*aptness*" to teach.

The time of day is now come, when every man professing to be *concerned* for the honour and progress of "pure and undefiled religion," must lay aside antiquated whims and fancies, and strenuously avail himself of every kind of agency allowed of by the word of God, which, in the order of Providence, he finds it in his *power* to use. Episcopal Ordination is not *necessary* to the progress of religion, but if deemed *expedient*, let it be allowed to all able and willing men, for whom competent support can be provided ; and if the present wealth of the Establishment is not sufficient to

admit of any considerable increase of Clergy, let quarterly collections be made in Churches, as they are in Wesleyan Chapels. Such an arrangement would, if I mistake not, immensely improve the condition of the Church of England, and qualify her to grapple with, and surmount her most formidable difficulties.

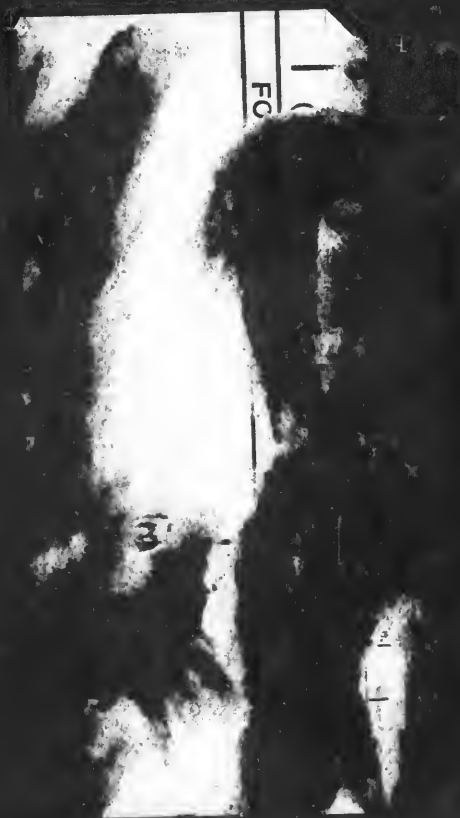
I have said for the present, as much as I can afford to say. I have allowed myself more liberty in my observations, than I suppose my friends, whether Methodists or Churchmen, will approve; but I have been, I hope, *honest* in my strictures. I have left very much unsaid, which, with propriety, might have been advanced to prove,—First, that the Church of England ought to be *perpetuated*, and Secondly, that every Methodist in the world ought to *love* it.

THE END.

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CHELMSFORD :

PRINTED BY CHALK, MEGGY, AND CHALK.



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